

# Galveston, TX Economic Recovery and Rebuilding Report

January 2009

Prepared by:



INTERNATIONAL  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
COUNCIL

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**BCLC**  
BUSINESS  
CIVIC  
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# Executive Summary

The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) was retained by the US Chamber of Commerce's Business Civic Leadership Center (BCLC) to assist Galveston, Texas in their economic recovery from the September 2008 floods. On October 28th and 29th, an IEDC team of economic development and business recovery experts visited Galveston. The objective of the project was to address the storm's impact on the local economy, identify the community's capacity for economic recovery, and develop specific recommendations to strengthen public and private sector cooperation to streamline the recovery effort.

Hurricane Ike struck the southeast coast of Texas on September 13, 2008 as a Category 2 storm, causing an estimated damage of at least \$11 billion to the state with direct impacts to 29 Texan communities. Although the water quickly receded in Galveston, there is considerable recovery and rebuilding to be accomplished on the island. The list of damages and problems include:

- Approximately 75 to 80 percent of the 2,500 businesses experienced severe damage
- Water levels greater than nine feet and mold in the historic "Strand" district
- Significant damage to the Port of Galveston, major cultural facilities, and UTMB campus
- 80 percent of residences had flood damage; one out of five units have been condemned
- Only 60 percent of the city's population had returned six weeks after the storm
- Significant labor shortages for most of the local businesses that have re-opened.

## Summary of Recommendations

The IEDC/BCLC team developed strategies and actions for economic recovery and rebuilding in ten different areas:

### Small Business Recovery

- Get SBDC or SBDC-like function on the Galveston island
- Identify the available resources for small businesses and disseminate info
- Collaboration of private & public lending organizations to better determine funding gaps
- Significantly grow and expand scope of GEDP's revolving loan fund (RLF) for immediate recovery efforts (need for a bridge assistance program)

### Business Retention and Expansion

- Concerted BRE outreach to all small businesses on the island (set quantitative goals)
- Assemble rapid response team to go after companies that are rumored leaving or displaced (pro-actively identify at-risk businesses)

### Economic Impact Study

- Work with local university and Houston Galveston Area Council to conduct an economic impact assessment for Galveston

## **Workforce**

- Coordinate business retention and expansion efforts with workforce investment board (WIB) programs, policies, and services
- Co-host a job fair with WIB for displaced individuals and businesses
- Major business organizations need to reach out to education leaders to match vocational instruction with local workforce needs

## **City's Leadership Role**

- City, in coordination with UTMB, needs to launch a comprehensive strategy to promote re-use of available space for development.
- City should become more aggressive in securing resources to support comprehensive economic development and emergency management (e.g. FEMA or EDA planning grant)

## **Downtown District**

- Identify local and national foundations and non-profits to fund a startup of a historic downtown business improvement district.

## **Strategic Planning**

- Revise comprehensive plan (with force of law behind it); community-wide economic development strategy that coordinates assets and business districts in city

## **Communications**

- City needs to develop a pro-active plan for increased clarity in communications through local and regional media; needs to be frequent and more accurate information
- Develop a central clearinghouse for information
- Dual coordinated messages:
  - Business community message: "We're open for business"
  - Political leadership message: "We need help and resources"

## **Emergency Management Planning**

- Enhance emergency management planning with greater collaboration of business community
  - Establish and communicate tiered re-entry for priority businesses
  - Information sharing

## **Organization**

- Stronger defined relationship and partnership between Chamber, GEDP, and City
  - City facilitates creation of partnership
- More aggressive city role in grantsmanship as a resource for entire community
  - Explore National Emergency Grant (NEG) funds through WIB
- Identify liaison to facilitate one-on-one contact between FEMA's prime contractors and Galveston-based businesses

## **Working w/ State & Federal Funders**

- Encourage more state and U.S. congressional representatives participation:
  - E.g. request waivers on all federal funding (related SBA collateral rules)
- Evaluate existing incentives to identify changes and address the needs of impacted employers
- Ask for comparable incentive packages to that of LA and MS Gulf Coast

# Project Objectives & Process

## Project Objectives

The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) was retained by the US Chamber of Commerce's Business Civic Leadership Center (BCLC) to assist Galveston, Texas in their economic recovery from the September 2008 floods. On October 28th and 29th, an IEDC team of economic development and business recovery experts visited Galveston. The IEDC expert team was comprised of John Zakian, CEcD, Greater New Orleans, Inc.; Jerry Bologna, Jefferson Parish Economic Development Corporation; Ines Pearce, US Chamber of Commerce's BCLC; Ed Gilliland, CEcD AICP, IEDC, and Carrie Ridgeway, IEDC.

The objective of this project was to address the following areas as they relate to economic and business recovery:

- Impact of the hurricane on Galveston's local economy and business community
- Local community capacity for economic recovery
- The economic recovery needs or gaps and who can fill the gaps (corporate citizens, local, state and federal government, etc.)
- Specific economic recovery recommendations including steps to strengthen public and private sector cooperation to streamline the recovery effort.

## Project Process

As a first step, the Business Civic Leadership Center (BCLC) and the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) sent representatives to Houston, TX on October 7, 2008 to assess the situation. IEDC prepared a background packet for the team to serve as an introduction to existing conditions and needs. The two-day site visit was organized around a series of interviews to obtain information from various stakeholders about the current state of economic development recovery efforts in the city and region. At the end of the second day, the team presented findings and recommendations as well as case examples of economic recovery efforts in the Gulf Coast states. Based on the findings and recommendations of the expert team as well as feedback from the community, IEDC drafted this report that outlines strategies and actions for economic recovery and rebuilding.

# Hurricane Impact

Hurricane Ike struck the southeast coast of Texas on September 13, 2008 as a Category 2 storm with winds at 110-mph and a 12 to 14 foot storm surge. It is estimated that the hurricane caused at least \$11 billion in damage to the state with direct impacts to 29 Texan communities<sup>1</sup>.

## Impact on Greater Houston Area<sup>2</sup>

As the third costliest U.S. hurricane of all time, Hurricane Ike not only severely impacted Galveston, but also the Greater Houston region, the coastal communities of Texas and Louisiana, and Gulf of Mexico oil operations. In the Greater Houston region, windows broke in downtown Houston buildings and power outages were a major problem. Some residents were still without electricity for two weeks after the storm.

The Bolivar Peninsula between Rollover Pass and Gilchrist experienced the most catastrophic damage. There was also major flooding in Texas City and other areas along Galveston Bay. Southeast Texas also experienced a significant impact, particularly Bridge City on Sabine Lake and nearby Orange. In Orange, salt water intrusion disrupted refinery operations, which could cause firms to either relocate or curtail their future expansion plans. The loss of homes in the Port Arthur and Orange areas is particularly critical to the local economy given the high demand for new housing to accommodate oil industry related growth. Furthermore, these areas were recently impacted by Hurricane Gustav and are still recovering from the 2005 Hurricane Rita.

In the Gulf of Mexico, winds and waves damaged or destroyed oil platforms, storage tanks and pipelines, but some operators had taken precautionary measures to avoid more devastating impacts. Immediately following the hurricane, U.S. oil production dropped from five to four million barrels per day, however oil production reached pre-Ike levels by late November.

## Impact on Galveston's Economy

In addition, Galveston, TX, as a barrier reef island, experienced devastating impacts in five key areas that have the greatest long-term impact on the community's economic recovery. These areas include small businesses, tourism, transportation and infrastructure, medical facilities and workforce.

### *Small Businesses*

Although the water quickly receded in Galveston, there is considerable recovery and rebuilding to be accomplished on the island. Approximately 75 to 80 percent of the 2,500 businesses on

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<sup>1</sup> Estimates from the Governor's Office.

<sup>2</sup> Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hurricane\\_Ike](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hurricane_Ike) on 1/6/09 and Houston site visit in October 7, 2008.

the island experienced severe damage. Mold growth is a particularly problem for a number of businesses and residences due to the water sitting for 10 days during the closure of the city.

### *Tourism*

Businesses in the urban core (including the 70+ square block historic district, the “Strand”) experienced water levels greater than nine feet<sup>3</sup>. Approximately six major cultural facilities in the “Strand” had significant water damage, mildew and/or mold, while other island attractions like the Lone Star Flight Museum are also in need of major repairs.

### *Transportation & Infrastructure*

The Port of Galveston, which provides a \$1 billion-a-year economic impact to Texas and 3,000 jobs locally, suffered heavy water damage to port equipment, buildings and piers. The City estimates that the sewage and storm water drains are in need of much repair due to the sand and debris that clogged the system, which creates greater risk of flooding in the case of another heavy rainfall.

### *Medical Facilities*

The damage to the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) campus (the school and the hospital) was extensive with six feet of water flooding approximately 750,000 square feet of campus facility space. The damage to the facilities far exceeds the facility’s \$115 million in insurance coverage<sup>4</sup>. The John Sealy Hospital at UTMB will be re-opening in early 2009, but with only 200 beds as opposed to 800 beds pre-storm.

### *Workforce*

Businesses are also experiencing major problems locating their workforce and/or hiring new employees with appropriate skill-sets. As of October 29th, only 60 percent of the city’s population or 34,000 of the 57,000 pre-storm population had returned to the island with 80 percent of residences experiencing flood damage and one-fifth of the housing stock damaged to the point of condemnation<sup>5</sup>. Restaurants have resorted to sharing their employees due to labor shortages as many of the waitresses/waiters were university students. Most of the students are currently taking fall courses off the island in College Station, TX.

## **The City’s Stated Recovery Funding Priorities**

Galveston Mayor Lyda Ann Thomas traveled to Washington to ask for \$2.4 billion for the island’s recovery. The request was for the following items:

- Housing - \$200 million
- Water system - \$100 million
- Sewer - \$75 million
- Drainage - \$75 million
- Traffic Controls - \$50 million

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<sup>3</sup> Hurricane Ike Recovery Report, October 24, 2008 by Galveston Economic Development Partnership,

<sup>4</sup> Articles in *The Galveston County Daily News*.

<sup>5</sup> City estimates as of October 28, 2008

- City facilities - \$50 million
- Roadways and bridges - \$300 million
- Beach erosion - \$100 million
- Port of Galveston - \$500 million
- UTMB - \$600 million
- Business Recovery - \$350 million

The mayor specifically asked for \$350 million to help local businesses rebuild, particularly since many of the small businesses' flood insurance are likely to not cover their damage. The request for the Port of Galveston would be directed at repairing storm damage as well as increasing the height of Pelican Island dredge disposal site levee walls and improving the bridge to the small island. These improvements are critical for the port's joint container terminal project with the Port of Houston. Infrastructure improvements would include the elevation of roadways that frequently flood during heavy rainfall and the creation of a flyover interchange. The media did report that some projects were considered controversial, such as site improvements for the East End flats and the creation of a flyover interchange<sup>6</sup>. At this stage, it is still not clear about the progress of Galveston obtaining these specific federal funds.

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<sup>6</sup> "Mayor Asks Feds for \$2.4B in Relief Aid", The Galveston County Daily News, September 23, 2008.

# Strengths & Challenges

The following observations – divided into strengths and challenges - were identified by the IEDC/BCLC team during interviews with community stakeholders. Galveston has a number of strengths that contribute to the community’s unique character and play a key role in the economic recovery of the island. Many of the challenges the community was facing prior to the storm have been further exacerbated in the aftermath of Hurricane Ike. These would include workforce issues, a declining population (particularly the middle class), potential staff reductions at UTMB, and the lack of a common vision for development on the island. A more detailed discussion of these strengths and challenges are included below.

## **Historical Overview of Local Economy**

### *Strengths*

Prior to the storm, the local economy was fairly diverse and strong, particularly in the following sectors: health care & education, port transportation and manufacturing clustered around oil and gas and maritime industries, tourism & hospitality, and financial & insurance services. As of July 2008, an estimated \$2.3 billion of new investments on the island was either under way or in the pipeline. This included over 3 million square feet of new or remodeled commercial space, 6,700 housing units and an estimated 800 new jobs being created.

### *Challenges*

There is concern that the local economic base that has built up in the last 10 years as well as more established business operations has been seriously undermined by the hurricane.

## **Education & Health Care**

### *Strengths*

Galveston is home to three institutions of higher education including the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston (UTMB), Galveston College, and the Texas A&M – Galveston campus. UTMB operates several federal labs & research centers and has received approximately \$200+ million in federal investments.

### *Challenges*

There is great concern over the future size of UTMB, which serves as a major economic engine for the island, as the University of Texas system recently dismissed 3,000 workers in Galveston, and contemplates more layoffs. The number of hospital beds at UTMB has also been reduced from 800 beds to 200.

## **Transportation & Port Facilities**

### *Strengths*

The Port of Galveston is a deep-water port with close proximity to the Gulf of Mexico and direct access to significant rail service. The port is also home to two Carnival Cruise line vessels that travel to Galveston year-round. In 2005, the cruise lines and their 532,000 passengers spent over \$934 million in direct purchases in Texas (32 percent increase from 2004) and generated 15,800 jobs from those expenditures.

#### *Challenges*

The Port of Galveston suffered significant water damage to facilities and the community's sewage and storm water drains are in need of much repair to avoid major flooding in the next heavy rainfall.

### **Oil & Gas Industry**

#### *Strengths*

Approximately 80 companies are currently involved in support services for the maritime and offshore oil and gas industries and 15 indicated plans for expansion prior to the storm. This growth is attributed to Galveston's proximity to Houston (one hour drive) and location within the Greater Houston's oil economy.

#### *Challenges*

Another factor is the volatile oil prices, which are likely to impact the Greater Houston economy.

### **Tourism & Hospitality**

#### *Strengths*

With a number of tourism, cultural and architectural assets, Galveston receives approximately 5 to 7 million visitors per year. Top island attractions include the historic "Strand" district, a number of museums and cultural facilities, the Moody Gardens Hotel and Convention Center, high-end hotels, and the island's attractive beaches. A high quality of life along the beachfront has also attracted second home/vacation investments from Houstonians, particularly in Galveston's West End.

#### *Challenges*

A number of small business owners in the historic district did not have commercial flood insurance, as it was cost-prohibited with the district's flood elevation. Many of these tourist-related businesses are re-thinking whether they will open their doors when the tourist season starts, which will have a significant impact on the devastated historic "Strand" district. There are a number of infrastructure problems to be addressed, which include flood mitigation and rebuilding.

### **Business Retention, Expansion, & Recruitment**

#### *Strengths*

Galveston has a fairly strong economic development delivery system for its size as well as strong leadership from business and community organizations. The Galveston Economic

Development Partnership, the city's economic development organization serving as a public-private partnership has focused on the recruitment, retention, and expansion of businesses on the island, particularly for medium and large size employers, as well as helping to improve the local business climate.

### *Challenges*

Business retention is not comprehensive, especially given the number of at-risk businesses impacted by the flood. It is also not coordinated between the various business organizations.

## **Business Community & Rebuilding Effort**

### *Strengths*

The Galveston Chamber of Commerce has strong relations with local businesses of all sizes including many of the local small businesses. The chamber plays an important role in promotion and advocacy work for these businesses. After the storm, the chamber has helped distribute critical information to local businesses, surveyed their needs, as well as helped to connect them with needed resources (financing, equipment, etc.).

### *Challenges*

There are a number of flood protection challenges for local businesses that are both physically and politically difficult to resolve. For example, there is uncertainty concerning the reuse, if any, of a large percentage of flooded properties, and whether owners can afford to rebuild structures up to current codes. These businesses are assessing whether to re-locate for protection of their assets. Insurance costs, which were high prior to the storm, will also be weighing more on the mind of both small to large businesses, particularly as premiums increase.

## **Small Businesses**

### *Strengths*

The Galveston Chamber of Commerce has close relationships with many of the small businesses on the island and has opened its doors to providing communication equipment for these businesses to use temporarily as they seek to recover and rebuild.

Since the storm, GEDP has worked with five local banks to facilitate short-term recovery loans for small businesses needing working capital as well as set up a 501c(3) to handle a Galveston Business Recovery Fund.

### *Challenges*

The island lacks a local Small Business Development Center on the island to help assist small businesses with these recovery challenges.

## **Workforce**

### *Strengths*

Galveston has almost half of the county's total workforce with over 35,000 to 40,000 jobs.

### *Challenges*

Galveston previously lacked sufficient technical and soft skill training for local residents and employees, which is now an even greater issue as employers seek to hire new employees to replace workers that haven't returned to Galveston. Galveston lacks an actively engaged local Workforce Solutions office (a human resource provider with the Texas Workforce Commission).

## **Community Development**

### *Strengths*

There are a number of organizations representing the interest of the historic district, tourism and beach community that are working on community assets and interests. Galveston also has a wealth of local philanthropic resources from such prominent families as the Mitchell's to faith-based organizations such as the Moody Foundation.

### *Challenges*

There needs to be a greater amount of cooperation between the various civic, non-profit and business organizations in Galveston to leverage time, treasure and talent towards community and economic development purposes.

## **Disaster Preparation & Recovery**

### *Strengths*

Prior to the storm, GEDP facilitated a Hurricane Recovery Task Force for the city's financial recovery and business recovery and developed a Business Disaster Recovery Guide.

Galveston had a well-prepared initial response to Hurricane Ike in terms of equipment and vehicles brought to the island within 48 hours of the storm-making landfall. Clearing of the streets and debris, utility connections and public safety issues were managed in a productive and efficient manner. Anecdotal information suggested that the response made six months progress in two weeks.

### *Challenges*

Strained city resources for clearing property for habitation as well as the lack of temporary housing provided by FEMA is preventing some of the population from returning to Galveston.

The City and local economic development organizations also face an operational challenge. It is difficult to operate on the parallel tracks that are necessary to address both flood recovery and city rebuilding. This challenge is compounded by resource constraints such as losing staff and/or financial resources. This is exacerbated by the need for the public and private sectors to implement these processes cooperatively.

## **Communication & Public Relations**

### *Strengths*

At the local level, town hall briefings have helped facilitate the flow of information to the public, particularly those immediately following the storm. The City also regularly updates its' web page to provide information on Hurricane Ike recovery-related issues, particularly those relating to city services, utilities, permitting, and health advisories.

### *Challenges*

The lack of frequent and accurate communication and data on the current situation in Galveston is still a major issue. There is still need for increased and frequent communication, particularly with the local business community. Local business needs seem to be less of a focus by the City in light of priorities to get government services up and running as well as deal with immediate residential needs.

There are also communication barriers that are preventing small to medium sized businesses in getting access to the resources they need to recover. Local manufacturers and service providers mentioned difficulty in the communicating with appropriate people at FEMA to get access to sub-contract work for rebuilding efforts, which serves an important role in business retention. Small and business also have immediate financing needs to be addressed. Conventional means of communicating with these small businesses such as phone, fax, and internet, are difficult when these businesses owners may have been dispersed from their homes and work places.

Galveston has substantial challenges associated with its public relations and national image given the storm. The presidential election as well as the country's financial crisis left little room in the national media for accurate reporting on Galveston's situation. The perception from media reports on Galveston is that either the community was completely devastated (and therefore should not be rebuilt) or that the island received only minor damage from the storm.

## **Relationship with State & Federal Agencies**

### *Challenges*

The City's relationship with the state and federal agencies concerning recovery and rebuilding could be improved. There is some confusion over the roles of local, state and federal actors in the recovery process appear. This is difficult when the state is overwhelmed, dealing with such a large flood impacted area.

## **Strategic Planning**

### *Challenges*

Finally, business leaders expressed concern about the community developing a long-term strategy or roadmap to navigate through these tough issues. They are concerned about Council Members making the bold decisions to move forward for full recovery. City leaders indicate the need for a more inclusive process for making sure the various community interests are considered in the creation of a vision or plan for the city's future.

## Disaster Recovery & Funding Gaps

Disaster recovery can be characterized by four activities: saving lives; restoring homes and infrastructure; business redevelopment and job creation; and restoring social, recreational, and cultural services.

1. Galveston has successfully moved beyond the saving lives or triage phase.
2. There are considerable efforts underway to restore homes and infrastructure. Many federal agencies are supporting these efforts.
3. Federal agencies are also assisting businesses, but the primary assistance vehicle, low interest loans, is unacceptable to businesses that cannot or do not want to take on more debt. Furthermore, most have no flood insurance or are underinsured. Business grant options, as discussed below, need private funding. Finally, the downtown historic district is in need of funds for planning and business support to remain viable.
4. The historic district and the island's cultural amenities have significant recovery challenges. There is limited government funding and much of the citizen and foundation funding gets diverted to other flood related needs. Therefore, they need private funding.

## Recommendations

The team primarily focused on economic development issues or issues that most impact job retention and growth. These included small business recovery; business retention & expansion; economic impact study; workforce; city's leadership role; strategic planning; downtown district; communication; emergency management planning; organization. Although the team regards housing as important to economic development, it deserves more attention than can be substantiated under this scope of work. Therefore, it is only briefly discussed here. The geographic focus is on the City of Galveston, but also considers the regional economy.

### **Small Business Recovery**

Small business is the backbone of local economies. Unlike larger businesses, they typically lack the resources to withstand even a few weeks of disruption. Even larger businesses suffer when their small business suppliers discontinue operations. Therefore, the team believes that small business support is the primary short-term need for economic development recovery. The establishment of several disaster recovery centers with SBA resources in Galveston is a good first step in this process.

As an immediate next step, the team recommends that the Small Business Development Center, currently located off the island, should be established at one of the FEMA disaster recovery centers. The local SBDC office has offered additional staff for this purpose. The SBDC officer should be co-located with the SBA customer service operators, which provide information on the SBA disaster loans. Coupling these complimentary services that are targeted at small businesses in one location will better serve their needs. It is critical to market these services through both traditional and unconventional methods such as using the networks of existing business organizations, the daily paper, online resources, as well as grassroots canvassing efforts.

The project team recommends that Galveston Economic Development Partnership (GEDP) and the Galveston Chamber of Commerce should take the leadership role in identifying and disseminating information on the available resources that allow small businesses to both recover and rebuild in both the short and long-term. This information is needed quickly to provide the knowledge necessary to direct business recovery and rebuilding efforts. Both of these organizations have indicated trouble in connecting with their flood-impacted businesses. Some have temporarily re-located out of the area and out of state. It is recommended that a central website that serves as repository of information and available resources for the business community be created and marketed. In addition, a brief summary of this information should be made available in paper format to distribute to locals without access to email, internet or phone. Canvassing efforts can help distribute this information throughout the island and beyond. These two organizations should join forces to distribute this information and

ensure they are not duplicating efforts in light of both organizations limited resources and available staff.

The SBA small business recovery center will close after short-term needs are addressed, yet there will still be great need for assistance in securing funding as well as conducting other rebuilding activities. The team recommends additional steps beyond the current SBA efforts. First, there is need for even greater collaboration between the private and public lending organizations to better determine and address funding gaps. The Galveston Business Recovery Fund, launched by the GEDP in cooperation with five local banks, is a critical resource for local businesses. Yet, there is significant need to grow and expand the scope of this revolving loan fund (RLF) beyond the \$10 million level to deal with immediate recovery efforts.

The team recommends that the City explore a bridge assistance program with the state. Florida has found that its bridge loan program has been effective in helping small businesses maintain operations while they are dealing with the process of securing other, longer-term financial support. The state works closely with local economic development organizations and chambers in a massive canvassing effort with loan applications just two weeks after a hurricane.

Both public and private sources are needed for such a fund. Sources could include EDA and CDGB funds as well as corporate foundation sources. The team recommends that all applications go to a formal review committee staffed by professionals, such as bankers, with lending and underwriting experience.

### **Business Retention and Expansion**

While the city has a fairly strong economic development delivery system that provides business retention services, the storm has posed new challenges for the Galveston community. GEDP and the Chamber are struggling to locate many of their flood-impacted businesses, particularly small businesses. There is concern that many of the local businesses are not taking advantage of the SBA technical assistance and loan programs, which can be an indicator of a few things. It indicates either a breakdown in communicating with these businesses, a lack of understanding of how to navigate through the federal program, and/or a failure of these programs to meet the businesses' financial needs. This concern cannot be validated without first contacting the flood-impacted businesses and gathering information to direct business recovery and rebuilding efforts. Such information gathering is a key component to a solid business retention program.

Therefore, the team recommends the local business and economic development organizations make a concerted effort to reach out to these small businesses in a coordinated fashion to avoid duplication of effort. The first stage of locating flood-impacted business owners involves grassroots efforts to canvass as well as the use of all community resources such as the Galveston County Daily News, the local utility company, and the City's resources and website. Some disaster-impacted communities around the country are providing online portals for businesses to register and provide their updated contact information. This outreach effort should also include small businesses that are not members of either organization. Setting quantifiable goals will help measure progress of outreach and connecting small businesses with

the appropriate resources. These small businesses need access to information such as the City's rebuilding requirements, inspection requirements, lists of state licensed contractors, information regarding how to select and pay a contractor, how to deal with insurance companies, as well as navigating through the local, state and federal government assistance programs, etc.

The team recommends the development of a reliable database of all businesses in Galveston. This database should include all base industry and large employers, chamber and GEDP members, and convention and visitor bureau members. But it should also include all small business, cultural, tourism and non-for-profit organizations, all of which play an integral role in the local, regional and state's economy. This database should include all types of contact and general company information, including cell phone numbers, which are critical for keeping in contact in a post-disaster situation. Such a database is an essential tool in promoting continuity planning programs, quantifying and deploying economic impact assessments, and post-disaster initial impact and long-term economic disaster impact assessments. It can also be used to facilitate and educate the business community on economic and workforce development initiatives.

The project team also recommends the assembly of a rapid response team to go after companies that are rumored to be leaving or displaced. There needs to be a pro-active effort to identify at-risk businesses based on a variety of factors such as the number and quality of jobs, tax revenue contribution, industry anchor, and importance to the local economy. These companies need more attention on behalf of the economic development organization in terms of surveying their short and long-term needs and linking them with the appropriate resources to retain them in the community.

In order to accomplish these business retention efforts, these organizations will need additional resources to fund additional staffing requirements. It is recommended that the organizations apply for National Emergency Grant (NEG) through the Department of Labor for funding (discussed later in this report).

### **Economic Impact Study**

The project team recommends that Galveston work with a local university and Houston Galveston Area Council to conduct an economic impact assessment for the City of Galveston that is independent of a FEMA impact assessment. This study should estimate the overall economic impacts of the hurricane on Galveston. These impacts would include estimates of the property damage (insured and uninsured) in terms of homes, commercial structures (property and inventory), vehicles, personal property, and public infrastructure and facilities. In addition, the study should provide estimates of revenue and/or output loss due to the disruption of production for the major industries that serve as economic drivers for Galveston (e.g. oil and gas, seafood, etc.). The loss in economic output from business interruption should cover the period of the evacuation. The report might also include a discussion of the types of recovery-related challenges, such as power outages, fuel shortages, telecommunication issues, curfews, and the inability for employees to get back to work, etc.

The purpose of performing this analysis is to provide decision makers and planners with an independent, third-party assessment of the storm's economic consequences. These estimates can be used in support the community's efforts to secure federal recovery dollars and federal disaster assistance. Adjustments should be made as additional information becomes available.

## **Workforce**

As mentioned above, Galveston is struggling with workforce challenges that have since been exacerbated by the storm, particularly in the number of skilled and semi-skilled workers available to local employers. Galveston lacks a local Workforce Solutions office on the island or in close proximity that would play a key role in pursuing workforce initiatives. While Galveston College is pro-actively engaging high school graduates into higher learning with the Universal Access program, there is more of a focus on the health care sector such as nursing, lab technicians, etc. While these initiatives are important, there is need for a comprehensive workforce strategy that addresses skill needs in the manufacturing sector. Local manufacturers servicing the oil and gas industry as well as other sectors cannot find skilled workers such as welders, pipe fitters, machine operators, etc. Even semi-skilled employees with basic life skills are in demand on the island.

To combat these issues, the team recommends that Galveston's economic development organizations coordinate business retention and expansion efforts with workforce investment board (WIB) programs, policies and services offered through Workforce Solutions. There are significant workforce training dollars through the Department of Labor (DOL), particularly those set aside for disaster impacted areas. These funds serve as an important tool for retaining businesses while improving the local skill base.

In addition, the city and local economic and business organizations should work with the local Workforce Solutions office to co-host a job fair that connects displaced individuals with local businesses. This fair should be well-advertised in locations that Galveston residents are likely to be relocated to so that they are made aware of local employment opportunities in their hometown.

Major business organizations need to reach out to education leaders to match vocational instruction with local workforce needs. Education leaders both in the K-12 and the post-secondary school system, particularly technical schools like Galveston College, need to better understand the basic knowledge and skills in demand by local firms. Local industry leaders need to provide input on vocational school curriculum both at the high school and technical school level as well as on the type of machinery and equipment used to prepare these workers. Technology deployment (practical instruction on how to use machinery as well as production techniques) should play a central role in training offered at local schools.

## **City's Leadership Role**

Mother Nature can unleash havoc on a community that not only destroys property and infrastructure, but also serves as an attack on a community's spirit. The Galveston community's determination to move on and rebuild a better and brighter future can serve as a true source of strength for any community. The City's leadership plays a key role in this process.

The rebuilding process requires the focus and commitment of all key community stakeholders. The City plays an important role in gathering these stakeholders to address the community's major challenges and move forward with a new sense of commitment and urgency. This sense of urgency has less to do with the speed of accomplishing tasks, and instead speaks more to the opportunity to move intentionally, thoughtfully, and strategically towards community goals with stakeholder support. Galveston is certainly at its own crossroads to either accept the status quo, which is likely to lead to further economic decline or attempt to transform some of its major challenges into real opportunities for the community.

One of these major challenges includes the future of the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) campus at Galveston. The UTMB's reduction of staff and hospital beds is imminent (as discussed above). The City with support of its economic development organization should coordinate with UTMB to launch a comprehensive strategy to promote the re-use of available space for development.

In addition, the City should become more aggressive in securing resources to support comprehensive economic development & emergency management. The funding for these activities includes FEMA or EDA planning grants.

## **Downtown District**

Galveston is fortunate to have a historic district with attractive architectural features of similar appeal to New Orleans' French Quarter. The "Strand" is home to several prominent regional cultural facilities that serve as contributors to the city's "quality of life", attracting both residents and visitors to the island. The downtown district experienced severe damage to the first floor facilities, forcing most of the small retail establishments to close due to the lack of affordable insurance. These cultural amenities depend on the presence of these establishments to provide the full experience of shopping, dining, and entertainment. While many of the cultural facilities like the Opera House are moving forward on rehab efforts, there is a question as to how many small businesses will be able to re-open once the tourist season starts up in the spring.

A healthy downtown lays a strong foundation for the entire city. The project team recommends that the city, working with property owners and businesses, establish a business improvement district (BID) for the historic downtown area to play a critical role in bringing the 'Strand' back to a healthy and vital state. While a number of downtown historic and cultural organizations exist, the area lacks an organization focused comprehensively on all aspects of managing and improving the downtown business vitality. BIDs throughout the country serve as strong

partners in generating the resources as well as guiding comprehensive initiatives to promote the growth and revitalization of a commercial district.

A downtown BID for Galveston will help create a collaborative environment for different organizations, civic and business interests to come together and help jointly work on revitalization efforts in a defined geography. Through the board governance and action committees, the downtown BID takes advantage of private sector leadership through representation from property owners, small businesses, cultural and civic organizations, historic preservation and architectural firms, and other professional services to provide strategic guidance and practical support.

The BID provides a framework to focus programs, projects and initiatives as well as help the community decide where the district is headed both in the short and long-term. Many of the BID's programs focus on keeping the downtown safe, clean and attractive through street cleaning crews, downtown ambassadors, signage, promotional events, etc. It is important for the BID leadership to build trust between downtown stakeholders, encourage dialog, and build consensus on downtown priorities. The BID also leverages city resources with business, community and external resources to accomplish these revitalization activities. For more resources & information on creating a downtown BID, visit the International Downtown Association's (IDA) website at [www.ida-downtown.org](http://www.ida-downtown.org) or call 202.393.6801. Also, the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street program has pioneered an approach for commercial district revitalization and provides a number of resources that will aid in Galveston's preservation-based revitalization efforts (visit [www.mainstreet.org](http://www.mainstreet.org) or call 202.588-6219 for more info).

The team recommends that Galveston identify local and national foundations and non-profits to help fund the startup of a BID in the downtown area. This relieves any burden on small businesses and/or property owners in receiving an additional tax on their investment while they are trying to re-invest in the district. There are several examples of foundations that provide funding to start such a business or commercial improvement district. In Grand Rapids, MI, the Grand Rapids Community Foundation provided Neighborhood Ventures, a community and economic development non-profit, with funding for planning the implementation of a commercial improvement district in the area<sup>7</sup>. The Providence Foundation worked with the City to provide funding to hire a consultant to help enable local legislation for a BID in Downcity<sup>8</sup>. As the district begins to revitalize and strengthen its position, an effort to become self-sufficient should be pursued.

Galveston currently lacks a downtown plan that could guide efforts to build an even better and more resilient downtown, as well as attract considerable flood-related public funding and private investment. The project team recommends Galveston immediately pursue a downtown planning process to create a plan to guide future development of the downtown. The process

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<sup>7</sup> For more info, contact Kimberly Van Dyk of Neighborhood Ventures, 616-301-3929, [vandykk@neighborhoodventures.org](mailto:vandykk@neighborhoodventures.org).

<sup>8</sup> For more information, contact Daniel Baudouin, Downtown Providence, 401-521-3248, [dbaudouin@provfoundation.com](mailto:dbaudouin@provfoundation.com)

of creating a downtown plan can happen simultaneously during the creation of a downtown BID. The leadership of this downtown BID is likely to influence the downtown plan. The City is likely to take the lead role in working with an experienced consultant retained to complete the downtown plan. Funding for planning efforts could either come from several federal sources such as EDA's strategic planning grant, FEMA's long-term planning grant, or CDBG funds.

The City's planning staff, GEDP, downtown businesses and other key downtown stakeholders need to be very engaged in the process and be aware of potential pitfalls. In addition, there needs to be the support of federal agencies such as FEMA to avoid any conflict with regulatory constraints. It is important to retain capable planning and engineering firms to address core district issues, including sustainability and historic elements. The sooner the plan is complete, the better position the City will be in to attract outside funding. There must be a balance between the City's short-term planning horizon with the long-term tendency of federal regulatory decisions.

### **Strategic Plan**

Prior to the hurricane, the City was nearing completion of a comprehensive plan for the island. In light of many assumptions changing in a post-storm situation, the team recommends that the comprehensive plan go through a revision process to update it before its adoption. This plan should include a community-wide economic development strategy that coordinates assets and business districts in the City. This economic development strategy should identify all community assets (i.e. tourism, deep-water port, institutions, etc.), discuss their importance and how they are interrelated, and highlight future projects and initiatives to strengthen these assets. This strategy helps outline how these projects and initiatives are working in concert to achieve the vision, goals, and objectives for the community.

The roles and responsibilities of the City and private sector EDOs should be clearly delineated in the development of this strategy, particularly as each sector has their strengths. The City government represents the collective will of the citizens. The private sector has business and economic expertise to be valued in the development of strategies to rebuild the local economy. GEDP should play a lead role in reviewing and determining industry targets as well as the strategies associated with each target. Both the Chamber and GEDP play an important role in identifying members who can provide valuable insight on specific sectors, as well as solicit input from their members for further general input. Ideally, the BID would be the leader in the section on downtown retail.

While the private sector should provide significant input into the development of the strategy, it should also be vetted through a public process whereby the local community also gets on board. These discussions lay the basis for developing a coherent and articulate strategy for economic development that is embraced by the community. This strategy can also serve as a promotional tool for the political, investment and business community.

This comprehensive plan should also have the force of law behind it, being consistent with planning, zoning and building codes. It is recommended that the plan be clear and consistent so there is not a lot of room for interruption.

## **Communications**

The team recommends the City to develop a strategic communications and media plan for recovery and rebuilding with assistance from the business and non-profit community. The purpose of this plan is to provide frequent and more accurate information when communicating to various audiences through the local, regional, and national media. The plan should be coordinated through city, county, chamber, and tourism & cultural organizations.

The communications plan developed by the City should have dual coordinated messages – one message for the business and visitor audience and another for political decision makers. The business community should have an external message intended to the region, nation, and globe that “Galveston is open for business.” These efforts need to dispel common myths that the floodwaters have not receded and instead actively promote opportunity and successes in the City. Galveston should not be shy in boasting about its successes, and should aggressively announce new business activity. Business successes should be communicated in a personalized story format and be provided within the context of recovery. One major communications project is the development of a coordinated message for opening the Spring tourist season, which requires the City to work with the CVB, the Chamber, GEDP, and other tourism organizations.

The City’s political communications message delivered by the political leadership to state and federal officials should state “Galveston needs the help and resources to recover”. The message should address the plans for recovery and rebuilding to state and federal audiences, as well as provide frequent and useful information to both businesses and individuals in need of assistance. Keeping businesses and people in limbo in terms of the City’s plans for permitting, redevelopment projects, etc. can be stressful and will unintentionally give the impression that there is a vacuum in leadership. Even in the case of ambiguity, it is important for the City to state that specific decisions are unknown at this time than to remain silent on the subject. The City, working with FEMA, also needs to clearly communicate its relation with FEMA and the roles and responsibilities of each party in the recovery process.

In addition, Galveston needs to develop a central clearinghouse to provide information to various audiences. The City might consider several practical and effective methods employed by Jefferson Parish (next to New Orleans) after Katrina. In Jefferson, the local economic development organization co-sponsored a website for all organizations to submit information in one central location. The community also advertised a toll number connected to a call center for the public to get answers to their questions. The local utility provided staff members to man the call centers. Galveston should consider these methods in effectively communicating with community stakeholders living locally or temporary out of the area.

## **Emergency Management Planning**

Galveston should enhance their emergency management planning with greater collaboration with the local business community in the process. This includes establishing a tiered re-entry system that pre-determines businesses to receive priority re-entry to Galveston in the event of an evacuation and/or disaster. It is a challenge to determine which businesses should receive priority over others. Communicating in advance with local businesses is key to improving this process as they provide a rich understanding of their unique business challenges in the event of a disaster.

In Jefferson Parish, the local government instituted a credential system with a plaque to determine businesses to receive priority in a re-entry process. The parish established the first tier to include utility workers, the second tier to include gas station and food operators, and so on. In the way of Hurricane Gustav, Jefferson announced this re-entry program in advance of the evacuation to prepare the business community.

The City should also help to share information with the business community on the emergency management planning process as well as receive feedback to identify decisions that would severely impact local businesses. Communication between the public and private sector is key to discovering workable solutions in making communities resilient and prepared for any type of disaster.

## **Organization**

The most successful community initiatives rely on partnerships from a wide range of community stakeholders (civic, cultural, social, academic, and business) that bring together resources, assets, and strengths. City government plays a key role in facilitating a more trusting relationship between stakeholders so that they collaborate around common interests and leverage their resources for the betterment of the community.

The team recommends the City take on a more aggressive role in facilitating a partnership between the Chamber of Commerce, GEDP, and the City around economic development purposes. All of these organizations have a vested interest in the future of Galveston as well as a strong role in improving the economic and business climate. The City takes the leadership role in creating the partnership and defining the roles of each organization in that partnership so that economic development efforts are aligned with the appropriate amount of resources to further strengthen the community.

The City government should also take a more active role in identifying grants and assisting in grant writing to serve as a resource for the entire community. The City can serve as a major resource and clearinghouse of information to point community and economic development organizations to grants that will sustain their activities. One major grant source used in disaster-impacted communities in Mississippi and Louisiana is the National Emergency Grant (NEG) funds offered by the Department of Labor (DOL) through the local workforce investment board

(WIB). These grants help provide financial assistance for additional staff to work on economic recovery efforts through organizations such as GEDP and the Chamber. They help these organizations to get back on their feet at a critical time. The City should also seek EDA, FEMA or other funding for a downtown masterplan.

The City should also identify a liaison to facilitate one-on-one contact between FEMA's prime contractors and local businesses in Galveston. The City is likely to have the closest relationship with the FEMA long-term recovery Emergency Support Function (ESF-14) and can help advocate for local businesses to get access to sub-contract work through FEMA's prime contractors. An introduction of local companies with specific skills and equipment useful in the rebuilding effort should be a priority for the City in retaining local businesses as well as providing employment opportunities to the local residents employed by those firms.

### **Working with State and Federal Governments**

The City and EDOs should maintain an effective relationship with the FEMA long-term recovery Emergency Support Function (ESF-14) and the Governor's Commission for Disaster Recovery and Renewal (CDRR)<sup>9</sup>. ESF-14 will be a key player in the rebuilding of the City, and will be looking to interact with local leadership. If there is a perceived gap in local leadership, FEMA may select local leaders based on who they feel are best. Therefore, it is preferred that the City, EDOs, community and business organizations, and local private leaders work together to address any perceived leadership gaps.

The Governor's CDRR will play a key role in securing the same degree of reimbursement that was awarded to Louisiana and Mississippi after Hurricane Katrina. The Commission is also likely to ask for a comparable incentive package to that awarded to disaster-impacted communities in the Louisiana and Mississippi Gulf Coast, i.e. the GO ZONE<sup>10</sup>. Therefore, Galveston should work closely with the Commission to ask for a comparable incentive package. There should also be an evaluation of existing incentives to identify changes and address the needs of impacted employers who received. This plays an important role in business retention and expansion.

The City should also continue to outreach to state and U.S. congressional representatives for greater involvement in their recovery efforts. Galveston city and business leaders should request that their representatives help to ensure that an equitable amount of the federal disaster funds gets delivered to Galveston based on need and the critical protection of the island's economic assets. The economic impact study should be conducted as soon as possible to provide further support of Galveston's needs. Also, these representatives should request waivers on all federal funding such as the SBA collateral rules.

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<sup>9</sup> The Governor's Commission for Disaster Recovery and Renewal is an advisory panel of public and private sector experts who will create a plan to assist Texas communities with recovery efforts after a natural disaster.

<sup>10</sup> The Gulf Opportunity Zone Act of 2005, signed into law by President Bush, contains economic incentives to rebuild the Gulf Coast as well as attract new investment to disaster-impacted communities. This incentives package is modeled after the New York Liberty Zone incentives created for parts of lower Manhattan after the September 11<sup>th</sup> disaster. For more information, visit [www.angelouconomics.com/GoZone.html](http://www.angelouconomics.com/GoZone.html).

## Expert Panelists

### **Jerry Bologna**

Director of Economic Development Services, Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission (JEDCO)

Jerry Bologna is the Director of Economic Development Services for the Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission (JEDCO). He has been with JEDCO for 9 years serving in various capacities. Currently, Mr. Bologna is responsible for Jefferson Parish's Business Retention Program, a program that garnered international acclaim in 2004 from the International Economic Development Council.

In this capacity, Mr. Bologna personally assists Jefferson Parish businesses in accessing tax incentives, financing, workforce development and other programs, which aids in retention and expansion. In addition to business retention, Jerry is also instrumental in industry recruitment having partnered with the Louisiana Department of Economic Development and regional economic development agencies in the attraction of new businesses to Jefferson Parish.

Jerry is a graduate of Jesuit High School and the University of New Orleans having received a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a Major in Management. He was also a 2004 graduate of Leadership Jefferson. Prior to his employment at JEDCO, he served as a loan officer at Eustis Mortgage.

In addition to his work at JEDCO, Mr. Bologna serves on the Boards of the Jefferson Chamber and the Leadership Training Program. In 2004, he was named by New Orleans City business as one of the "Top 40 Under Forty." He is serving as Class Chairman for Ursuline Academy's Serviam Annual Fund Drive and has recently lectured to entrepreneurship classes at the University of New Orleans as well as speaking to various business and civic groups throughout Southeast Louisiana. Jerry is married and is the proud father of two daughters.

### **Inés Pearce**

Chief Executive, Pearce Global Partners

Inés Pearce launched Pearce Global Partners (PGP) to address the needs of government, business, non-profits and communities to reduce the potential for devastating loss of life and property from natural and human-caused disasters. An expert in public-private partnerships, in 2007 Ms. Pearce represented the World Economic Forum at the United Nation's Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Geneva, Switzerland. During the 2007 California wildfires, Ms. Pearce was selected by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Business Civic Leadership Center to be a liaison during disasters and facilitate long-term recovery, such as 2008's flooding in Iowa, storms in Florida, Hurricanes in Texas and Louisiana. Prior to PGP, Inés was appointed as Seattle Project Impact Director for the City of Seattle Emergency Management in 1998,

managing four mitigation programs that provided resources for safer schools, homes, businesses, and better hazard maps. She's President of the Contingency Planning & Recovery Management (CPARM) group, the Disaster Resistant Business (DRB) Toolkit Workgroup, and on the Board of CREW.

**John Zakian, CEcD**

Vice President, Greater New Orleans (GNO), Inc.

John R. Zakian has 30 years experience in public service senior management positions with city and county governments as well as non profit corporations in diverse regions of the eastern United States. His roles have included being chief operating officer for Westchester County Government in the New York metro region, founding chief executive for a non profit economic development corporation serving New Bedford, MA. Assistant City Administrator and Community Redevelopment Agency Executive Director for West Palm Beach, FL. and the first full time chief executive for the Yonkers, NY Industrial Development Agency.

He has a MPA "with distinction" from Pace University, has successfully completed several senior executive programs at Harvard University John F. Kennedy School of Government including the Strategic Public Sector Negotiation and Senior State and Local Executive Programs, and has earned the Certified Economic Developer (CEcD) credential. His expertise covers general city and county management; creating and managing 501(C)3 non profit corporations; all aspects of economic, community, and housing development, and redevelopment; and comprehensive grantsmanship from writing and procurement to implementation and compliance. Specialized areas of knowledge include strategic planning, redevelopment planning, privatization, public/private partnerships, alternative revenue development, and innovative public service programs.

**Ed Gilliland, CEcD, AICP**

Consultant

Ed Gilliland has seventeen years of economic consulting experience with cities, counties, quasi-public agencies, and private clients. He specializes in strategic planning, organizational development, real estate and brownfields development, commercial revitalization, financial analysis, and program development. Mr. Gilliland directs IEDC's work with the EPA on brownfields and smart growth, the DOC (EDA) on the information dissemination of best practices, and the DOJ on their Weed and Seed neighborhoods. He also directs work on numerous local assignments. His capabilities go beyond the consulting and project management roles. He has facilitated workshops, instructed in real estate, put together training courses, and managed periodicals. He coauthored IEDC's books *Targeted Area Redevelopment* and *Real Estate Redevelopment & Reuse: An Economic Development Practitioner's Guide*. Mr. Gilliland holds an M.B.A. from the University of Virginia Darden Graduate School of Business Administration.

**Carrie Ridgeway**

Senior Associate, International Economic Development Council

Carrie Ridgeway is a Senior Economic Development Associate in the Advisory Services and Research department at the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) in Washington, DC. She comes to IEDC with 12 years of broad experience in local and regional economic development in the United States, China, and Western Europe. She currently serves as the project manager of the Economic Development Administration's (EDA) New Orleans & Gulf Coast Economic Recovery Program (2008-2010). She has previously served as project manager for several projects with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization's (UNIDO) ITPO - China office to conduct strategic planning assessments for two communities in Shandong Province, P.R. China. Her past IEDC projects also include an economic development assessment for the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community (KBIC) in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan; an economic development division assessment for the City of Columbus, OH; neighborhood revitalization assistance for the City of Rock Hill, SC; Birmingham, AL; and Pleasantville, NJ; and IEDC's 2006 national salary survey project.

Prior to joining IEDC, she worked as an Associate at Economics Research Associates (ERA) in Washington, D.C. as well as served as a consultant on an Asian Development Bank (ADB) technical assistance project in mainland China. She has also held positions that include: business attraction for the government of Northern Ireland; marketing for a downtown Business Improvement District (BID) in Berkeley, CA; project assistance in redevelopment projects for the Emeryville, CA Redevelopment Agency; and research on an NSF study on workforce issues in the IT industry. She obtained a Master's degree in City and Regional Planning from UC Berkeley where she specialized in regional economics and international development. She has a Bachelor of Sciences in Business Administration from the Haas School of Business at UC Berkeley.

# About IEDC & BCLC

## About IEDC

The International Economic Development Council (IEDC), a 501c(3), is the leading association serving economic development professionals and those in allied fields. IEDC's 4,500 members are committed to building local and regional economies worldwide. IEDC's members and partners represent an array of organizations: city departments, development authorities, regional economic development organizations, consultants, neighborhood groups and nonprofit organizations. For more than 30 years, IEDC has been providing quality services that help find solutions to the complex and varied issues of economic development. IEDC's technical assistance ranges from helping counties develop economic development strategic plans to assisting at-risk urban neighborhoods with small-scale revitalization and development efforts.

The IEDC Economic Recovery Volunteer Program, funded by grants from the Economic Development Administration, deploys IEDC member professionals to regions of the hurricanes Katrina and Rita impact zone. The volunteers provide technical assistance to economic development organizations (EDOs) and businesses located in areas of the Gulf Coast that suffered heavy damage. Since 2005, IEDC has facilitated 150 volunteer technical assistance visits to increase the post-disaster survival rate of small- and medium-size businesses and assist with long-term economic recovery across the Gulf Coast of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Texas. Funding from the Economic Development Administration has also enabled IEDC to send an expert panel to work with local partners on strategic recommendations for the restructuring of the New Orleans Economic Development delivery systems. IEDC also worked with the Business Civic Leadership Center on a major forum in DC to assist the states and communities hit by Katrina and Rita with business re-investment as well as sent an IEDC team to provide business recovery assistance in response to the wild fires in San Diego, CA.

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## About BCLC

The Business Civic Leadership Center (BCLC) is a 501(c)3 affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation. BCLC is the U.S. Chamber's resource and voice for businesses and their social and philanthropic interests. BCLC's vision is for the positive role of business in society to be understood and advanced. Our mission is to promote better business and society relations and improve long-term social and economic conditions by:

- Communicating the U.S. private sector's unique and valuable contributions
- Cultivating strategies and practices that achieve positive results
- Coordinating public-private partnerships and coalitions

BCLC works with leaders from the business, government, and nonprofit sectors to address and act on shared goals. Our overarching goal is to help build good will, good relations, and good markets by focusing on issues that affect businesses from a social and economic standpoint. This is what we call "business and society relations."

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