

surveys, and several citizens' taskforces. They utilized the island's TV station along with newsletters and word-of-mouth publicity to engage residents in the planning process.

"We provided those who participated in planning sessions with vulnerability maps and talked through different scenarios including high tides and hurricane storm surge," Gambill said. "Impacts across the island vary, so the process is just as much about negotiating different interests as it is about developing solutions."

What was a novel approach at the time has now become the standard nationwide. The National Association of Climate Resilience Planners has developed a community-driven climate resilience planning framework that emphasizes the importance of planning with members of a community and not just for them. Plans are also more likely to be implemented when community members are involved because there are more individuals holding government officials and community leaders responsible.

These plans are essential for coastal communities as climate change continues. The benefits are two-pronged, according to Gambill. "Having a plan helps governments act quickly when there are opportunities for funding and implementation, but it also helps build relationships within the community for times when there is a disaster." And that's exactly what happened following the adoption of the plan in April 2016.

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When Hurricane Matthew struck the Southeastern United States in October 2016, Tybee Island experienced its highest storm surge and tide in recorded history. While the ocean side of the island had some sand dunes to protect the island from the incoming waves, there were numerous gaps, particularly in spots used for vehicular access to the beach. Those holes in the dune system became raging rivers when the first storm surge hit, sending a wall of water into town. In addition to the damage from flooding, many buildings also experienced damage from the force of the surge channeled through the access points. At its peak, the storm surge reached nearly 12.4 feet, completely flooding the ground level of any beach adjacent properties that were not elevated.

Hurricane Irma, less than a year later in September 2017, brought a different set of problems to Tybee Island. Because of the storm's path up the Florida peninsula, the flooding from the storm came not from the ocean, but from the creeks and rivers that make up the west side of the island. Virtually all of this land is a coastal estuary, comprised of marshes and wetlands, with a thin strip of barrier island where the bulk of Tybee Island's buildings are located. Following the storm, there were almost no dunes left on the island. The storm surge reached 12.23 feet, just a fraction less than that caused by Matthew less than a year earlier.

While these two storms devastated the island and its residents, they also presented a unique opportunity to implement portions of their sea rise plan. The significant flooding