

CLIMATE CHANGE RISK MITIGATION STRATEGIES FOR CULTURAL RESOURCES
WITHIN SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED COMMUNITIES

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In most communities, thinking about how emergency management may effect cultural resources doesn't happen until resources are deployed following a disaster. As climate change causes sea level rise and increased storm frequency and severity, the need to plan for cultural resources before disaster strikes grows. This project provides an overview of the state of Florida framework for local government planning for disasters and for cultural resources and—within that structure—presents model policy guidance for communities to maximize available resources in planning to protect their cultural resources. By focusing on the experience of the city of Fernandina Beach, Florida, the project details the processes of identifying cultural resources—from historic structures to socially valuable community meeting places—and assessing their vulnerability to climate change related risks, of community engagement to develop appropriate policy language and of tailoring that policy language to the needs of a particular community. Less detailed reviews of other community's approaches with exemplify the planning approaching other jurisdictions and variously sized communities. Specific focus will be given to the challenges of implementing model Federal Emergency Management Agency guidance in mitigating risk to cultural resources. When possible, connections will be drawn between activities which mitigate climate change risk to cultural resources and provide communities insurance rate benefits under the National Flood Insurance Programs' Community Rating System.