



Midway Economic Development Plan

2020

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Project Overview

The City of Midway has prepared this Economic Development Plan to improve community and economic development in the community. This Plan was informed by stakeholders through a series of community engagement activities and funded by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity through the Competitive Florida Partnership Grant.

The Plan contains a vision for the future of the community as well as goals, strategies, and concrete actions that can be implemented by community stakeholders, including elected officials, residents, and business owners, to achieve Midway's vision and goals.

These goals are as follows:

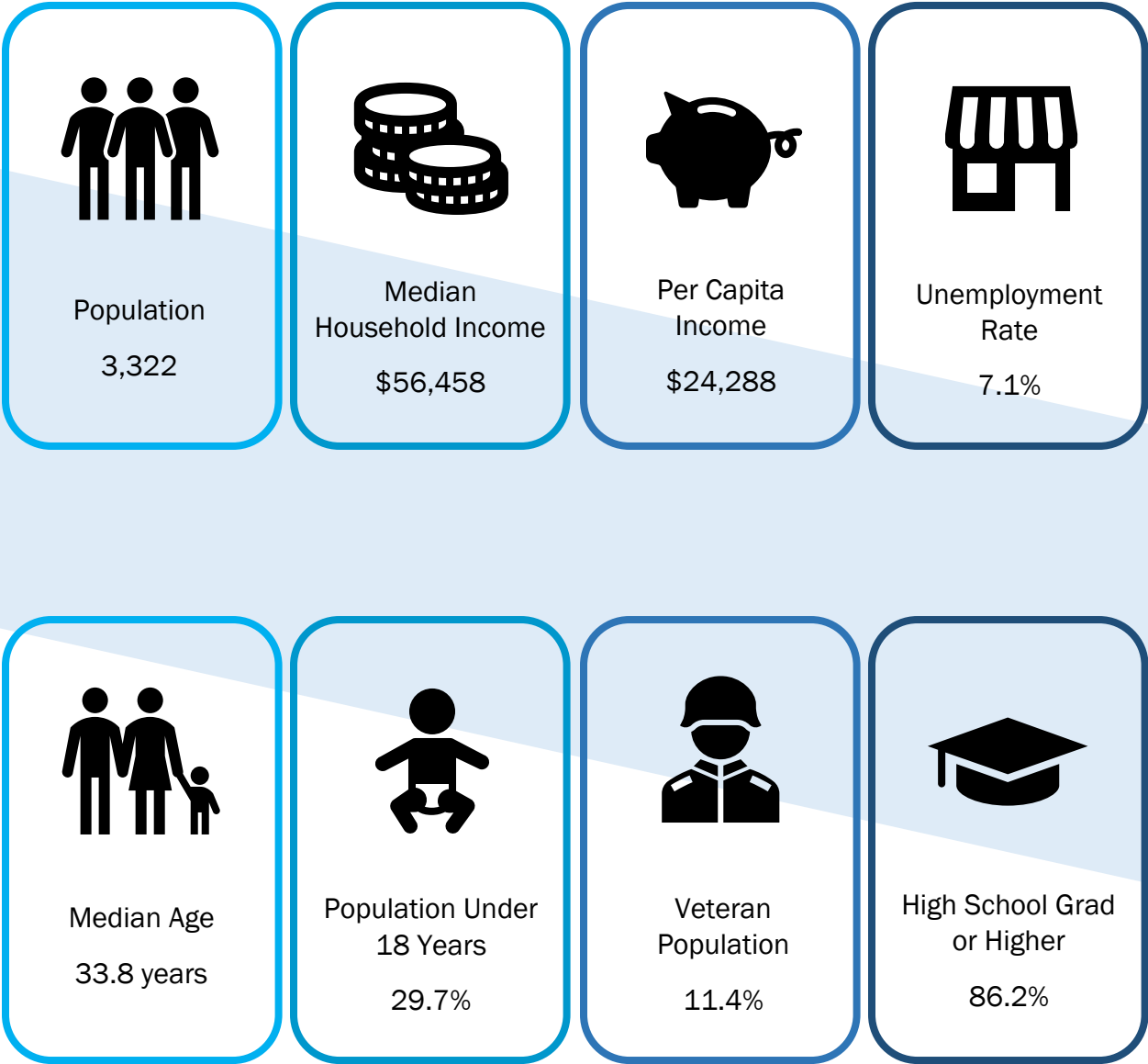
- Improve and expand public infrastructure
- Develop community facilities and resources
- Increase access to health and emergency services
- Improve housing

Strategies and actions for each goal are outlined in this Plan, including funding opportunities and ways to approach the various projects. Additional aspects of the Plan include background research on City of Midway with a community profile, an overview of community engagement activities, and sections on disaster resiliency and how plan implementation will be monitored and evaluated.

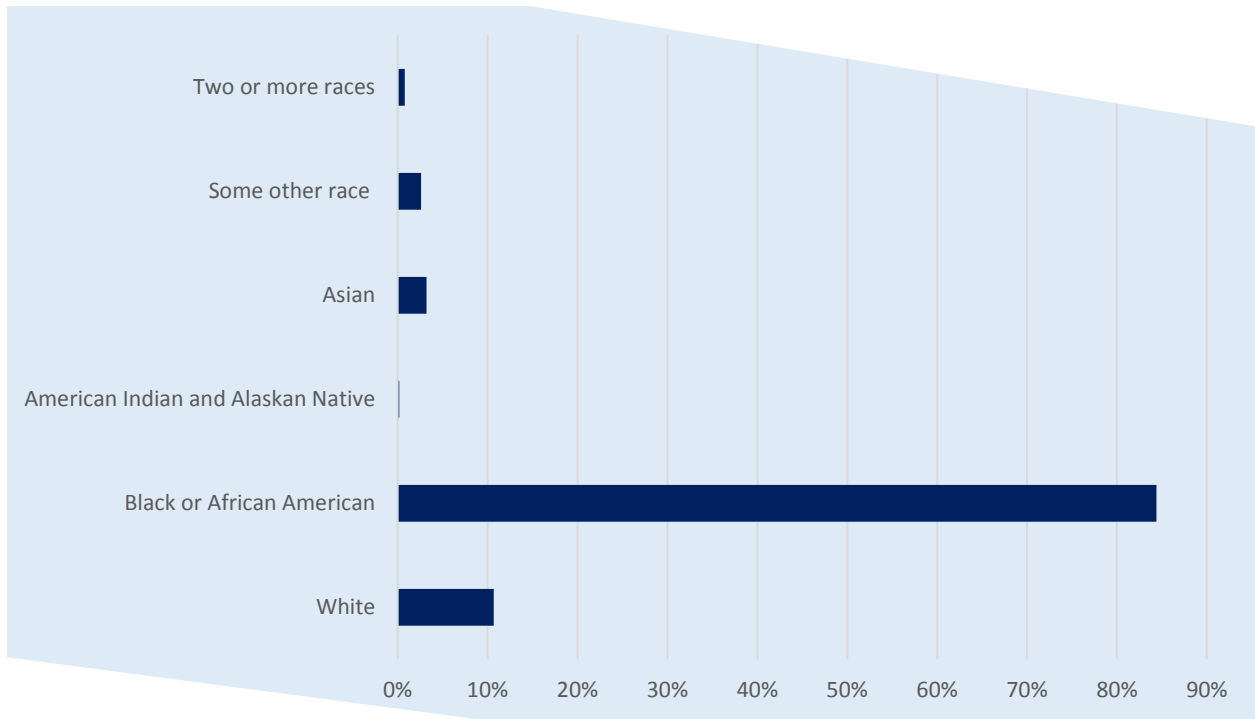
Data At-A-Glance >>

This section provides an overview of key socio-economic indicators, including population and income data, which are useful for framing Midway’s unique economic situation. As a note, the only available data was produced prior to both Hurricane Michael and the COVID-19 economic crisis.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC INDICATORS



POPULATION BY RACE / ETHNICITY



FAMILIES AND LIVING ARRANGEMENTS



Total housing units	1,402
Persons per household	2.53
Median housing value	\$137,600
Median gross rent	\$1,126
Households with internet	78.7%

Community Profile >>

The [ESRI Tapestry Segmentation](#) tool provides further insights into Midway's population and helps describe common consumer styles and lifestyle groups within the community. Using Midway's ZIP Code (32343), the tool identifies consumer segments of the population (out of 67 segments total), which are based on demographic data as well as socio-economic characteristics. According to the tool, Midway contains two consumer segments: *American Dreamers* (88.9% of the population) and *The Great Outdoors* (11.1% of the population), which are described below:

AMERICAN DREAMERS – A young, diverse population group mostly comprised by couples living with their kids and grandparents in single-family homes that they own rather than rent. Most households have at least one car and commute to work in Tallahassee. These households are well connected and dependent on internet access for everything from banking to entertainment.

THE GREAT OUTDOORS – This group prefers living in rural Midway to metropolitan Tallahassee. Most are empty nesters with an active lifestyle who enjoy domestic travel, primarily invest in land, and are approaching retirement. Households have at least one car to accommodate work commutes, but some individuals also work from home. This population segment is very do-it-yourself, cost conscious, and are likely to maintain their own yards and gardens.

City of Midway has a younger population and higher population density than Gadsden County, which suggests that Midway is well positioned for the development of downtown commercial space with opportunities for small-scale entrepreneurship and community interaction. Additionally, almost 5% of Midway residents do not own a vehicle and over 35% own just one vehicle, which suggests that a local, pedestrian-friendly space would be enjoyed by a significant portion of the community.

Source 1: <https://www.esri.com/en-us/arcgis/products/tapestry-segmentation/overview>

Source 2: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

CITY ASSETS ▷▷

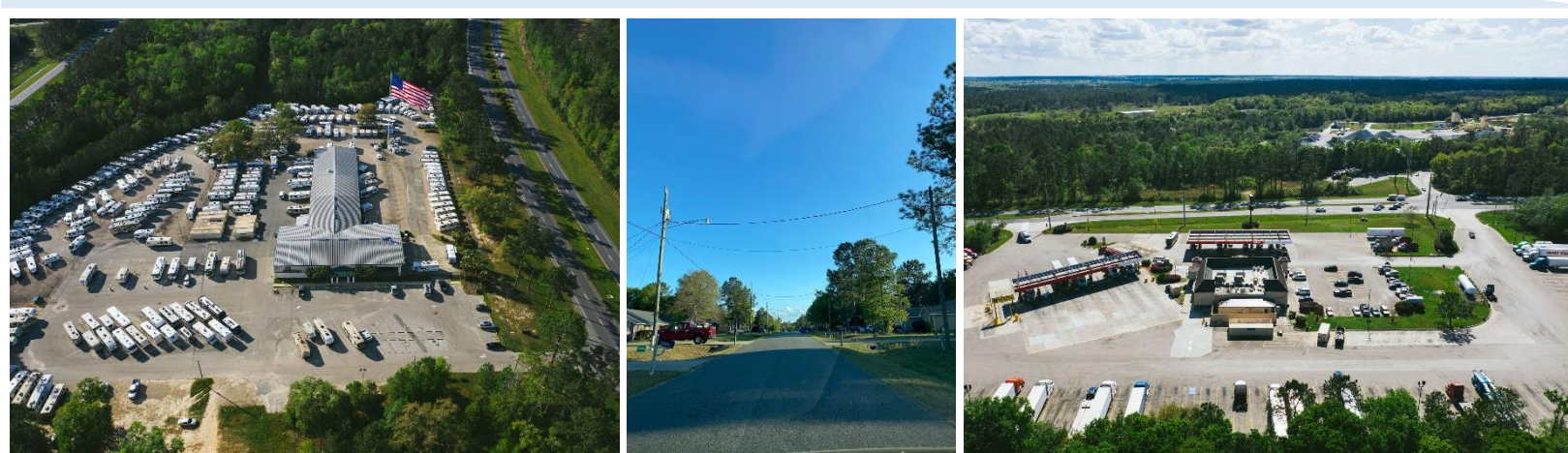
The purpose of this asset tour is to demonstrate to our state and federal agency partners how Midway looks/feels and to highlight which spaces/facilities/infrastructure the community wants to improve. Midway's story is not typical of small towns in North Florida. The city is spread out around two major highways. Most of the housing is in subdivisions, far from city hall. Industry is largely based on transportation activities with no small businesses that can cater to everyday needs. Midway still has no main street, city park, library, pharmacy, health clinic, or grocery store. Despite these circumstances, we want to demonstrate what Midway does have already and what the city can build on to make the community more successful and vibrant.

COMMUNITY & RECREATIONAL ASSETS

Midway City Hall
Midway Fire Department
Midway Police Department
Eugene Lamb Jr. Recreation Center
U.S. Post Office
New Beginnings Day Care
Helping Hands Social Services

COMMERCIAL ASSETS

Four Star Freightliner
Seminole Trusses
Dollar General
Sunoco Gas Station
Ring Power CAT
Truck Stops (Pilot, Flying J)
Camping World
Nearby Hotels



INDUSTRY AND EMPLOYMENT >>

The following table details the various industries that Midway residents work in. Primary fields of employment are educational services, healthcare, social assistance, public administration, and retail trade.

Industry	Individuals Employed
Total Number of People Employed	1,684
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	365
Public Administration	314
Retail Trade	221
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	141
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	137
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	129
Construction	118
Manufacturing	103
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	63
Wholesale trade	44
Information	28
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	14
Other services, except public administration	7

HOUSING >>

Midway residents have expressed a need for more affordable housing as well as the rehabilitation of older homes and/or homes that were damaged by Hurricane Michael in 2018 and have not yet been repaired. As of the most recent estimate, there are a total of 1,375 housing units in Midway. These homes are primarily single-family houses. A total of 326 are mobile homes, which are generally more vulnerable to damage during a disaster.

Of the available housing units, an estimated 1,253 units are currently occupied, which indicates that over 100 housing units are, for unknown reasons, unoccupied. Several housing subdivisions exist in Midway, where single-family houses are continuously being built. However, these houses are not necessarily affordable for low income households. Overall, of the 1,253 occupied housing units in Midway, more housing units are owner-occupied (951 units) than renter-occupied (302 units).

SWOT Analysis >>



STRENGTHS

- Commuter friendly
- Access to I-10 and US 90
- Undeveloped / vacant land
- Workforce training opportunities
- Strong transportation and warehousing industry
- Young, educated population



WEAKNESSES

- Limited internet
- Food desert (no fresh foods)
- Limited affordable housing
- Limited public space
- Not pedestrian friendly
- Limited city revenue for public improvement projects



OPPORTUNITIES

- Proximity to Tallahassee
- Low taxes and vacant land
- Partner with Gadsden County Development Council, Midway's Economic Development Organization
- Community motivated to revitalize Midway
- Build new affordable housing
- Tourism overflow from sports/concert venues in



THREATS

- Hurricanes and storms
- COVID-19 economic crisis
- Fire station #1 not operational
- Lack of hardened infrastructure
- Only one evacuation route out of subdivisions
- City staff turnover

Stakeholder Input

City of Midway stakeholders participated in all aspects of the Competitive Florida Partnership Program, including three community workshops and an asset mapping exercise. The following section describes these instances of community engagement in greater detail.

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP #1

February 19, 2020

The first Community Workshop focused on problem identification, asset identification, and goal development.

- **Build a Hero:** Stakeholders brainstormed the City of Midway’s ‘villains’ (problems or obstacles) and ‘heroes’ (solutions or actions needed).
- **Asset Identification:** Stakeholders used post-it notes to identify Midway’s commercial, recreational, historic/cultural, and social/organizational assets on large city maps.

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP #2

February 26, 2020

The second Community Workshop focused on asset prioritization, project identification, goal finalization, strategy development, and creative thinking.

- **Asset Prioritization:** Stakeholders used ‘traffic light’ colored stickers to assign priority levels to assets that had been identified during the Asset Mapping activity at the first Community Workshop. Assets with the highest priority (or potential) were given a green sticker, medium priority assets were given a yellow sticker, and the lowest priority assets (i.e. assets that did not need to be highlighted in the Economic Development Plan) were given a red sticker.
- **Name the Potential:** Stakeholders brainstormed strategies and project ideas for assets that had been assigned a high or medium priority during the Asset Prioritization activity.
- **Workshopping Goals & Strategies:** Stakeholders reviewed draft goals and strategies for economic development that had been formulated by the project management team based on problems identified during the first Community Workshop’s Build a Hero activity. Stakeholders discussed content in small groups, provided feedback on the draft language, and identified strategies that needed the highest priority in the Economic Development Plan.

- **Reimagine Downtown:** Stakeholders discussed a major problem that was identified at the first Community Workshop—Midway needed a downtown space that could meet the commercial and recreational needs of the community. Stakeholders identified the ideal location for a downtown space and listed key amenities that they would like to have available in this space.

VIRTUAL ASSET MAPPING EXERCISE

March 31, 2020

The third instance of community engagement, the Asset Mapping Exercise, occurred during the COVID-19 health crisis. Due to limitations on public meetings and group gatherings, the exercise, which is traditionally completed in-person as a community tour, was moved to a virtual format.

Using drone footage of Midway, the project management team and Midway stakeholders provided an asset tour of Midway for state and federal partners from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), Florida Department of State (DOS), Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). State and federal partners identified community strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and grant resources that could be accessed to improve local economic development. Those opportunities and resources are included in this Plan.

Vision ▶▶

Midway stakeholders seek to build a more cohesive, resilient community with more commercial, recreational, employment, and educational opportunities as well as a higher quality of life.

Midway is a city that was established without a traditional downtown or the small businesses that often exist on a community's main street. Instead, the city is bisected by two major transportation corridors: I-10 and US 90. Businesses located in the city are, in part as a result of this location, primarily related to the transportation and warehousing industry. Furthermore, many residents commute to Tallahassee for work. While Midway-based businesses provide a source of employment and economic growth, few businesses cater to the day-to-day needs of residents.

For these needs, most Midway residents rely on resources available in City of Quincy (Gadsden County) and City of Tallahassee (Leon County). However, community stakeholders wish to have these same resources available in City of Midway, including a grocery store, library, pharmacy, health clinic, bank, and traditional restaurants—essential components of a rural community. Additionally, these essential businesses can serve as a meeting place for community members and point of social interaction.

Ultimately, the primary wish that Midway stakeholders have expressed is to build on community assets that currently exist in order to develop a central commercial district that caters to everyday needs of residents and improve access to education, employment, and recreational spaces for Midway's diverse population. By implementing the Action Plan contained herein, these objectives can be achieved.

Goals and Strategies

GOAL 1. IMPROVE & EXPAND PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Strategy 1.1. Improve roads in subdivisions

Strategy 1.2. Enhance mobility by exploring opportunities for sidewalks, stoplights, crosswalks, streetlights, and other roadway improvements

Strategy 1.3. Increase community awareness of transportation alternatives

Strategy 1.4. Expand sewer systems

Strategy 1.5. Improve drinking water quality

GOAL 2. DEVELOP COMMUNITY FACILITIES & RESOURCES

Strategy 2.1. Explore opportunities to increase police, fire, and EMS presence in Midway

Strategy 2.2. Partner with nearby schools, day care facilities, senior centers, and/or healthcare facilities to increase access to these resources by Midway residents

GOAL 3. INCREASE ACCESS TO HEALTH & EMERGENCY SERVICES

Strategy 3.1. Explore opportunities to introduce fresh produce and healthier foods

Strategy 3.2. Create recreational spaces

Strategy 3.3. Establish a library with internet-based and other community resources

Strategy 3.4. Explore opportunities to develop a downtown space and expand commerce

GOAL 4. IMPROVE HOUSING

Strategy 4.1. Expand affordable housing

Strategy 4.2. Rehabilitate existing houses

Action Plan

GOAL 1. IMPROVE AND EXPAND PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE				
	Project / Action Name	Cost	Description	Funding Options
Strategy 1.1	Citizens Road Improvement Campaign	N/A	<p>Crowdsource photos of and information on damaged roads in Midway from residents to create a prioritized list of roads that need repair work</p> <p>Submit list to City for assistance— future road repairs will be done according to list (in order of severity)</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>Citizens Road Improvement Campaign</p>
Strategy 1.2	Midway Streetscapes Improvement Project	\$40,000 - \$50,000	Complete study of Midway’s primary roads that provides suggestions for how to improve walkability and streetway aesthetics	DEO Community Planning Technical Assistance Grant (no match required)
	Street Lighting Installation	\$100,000 - \$500,000	Install street lighting near City Hall and the Gadsden Express bus stop to promote safety and improve visibility	Community Development Block Grant Neighborhood Revitalization (CDBG-NR)
Strategy 1.3	Public Awareness Campaign of Transportation Alternatives	N/A	Partner with Apalachee Regional Planning Council to share free & low-cost transportation alternatives for residents who cannot drive or do not have access to a vehicle	N/A
Strategy 1.4	Explore Adding Modular Sewer System to City-Owned Parcel	N/A	Work with USDA Area Office in Marianna, FL to determine whether Midway should pursue adding modular sewer system to city-owned parcel where City Hall is located	USDA funding, if needed

Strategy 1.5	The Quarters - Tap Water Assessment Project	N/A	Request assistance of Florida Dept. of Health to test tap water quality in 'The Quarters' historic neighborhood in Midway	N/A
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GOAL 2. DEVELOP COMMUNITY FACILITIES & RESOURCES

	Project / Action Name	Cost	Description	Funding Options
Strategy 2.1	Repair Midway Fire Station #1	\$100,000 - \$500,000	Repair roof and other damage caused by Hurricane Michael in 2018 so that Midway Fire Department can operate out of both fire stations	Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR)
	Build Hardened Facility for Midway Police Department and Public Works Department	More than \$1,000,000	Design, engineer, and construct new, hardened building on the same parcel as City Hall for Midway Police Department and Public Works Department, which are currently housed in trailers Convert trailers into public library and resource center	Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR)
Strategy 2.2	Improve Senior Citizen Access to Local Senior Centers	N/A	Coordinate with Senior Centers in Quincy and Tallahassee to organize regular shuttle trips for senior citizens between Midway and these Centers	N/A

GOAL 3. ACCESS TO HEALTH & EMERGENCY SERVICES

	Project / Action Name	Cost	Description	Funding Options
Strategy 3.1	Partner with Midway's Dollar General Store Management to add fresh food to the location	N/A	Coordinate with store manager to add fresh food to Dollar General and eventually convert location into a Dollar General Market	N/A

	Midway Community Garden	Less than \$5,000	Identify location for community garden at Eugene Lamb Jr. Recreation Center Create community group to oversee garden construction and maintenance	Consider asking for donations from local businesses or using some proceeds from the annual Soul Santa event to fund garden materials
	Recruit Grocery Store for Midway	N/A	Request assistance from Gadsden County Development Council (GCDC) to identify lot for future grocery store and help recruit grocery store for that lot	N/A
Strategy 3.2	Expansion of Eugene Lamb Jr. Recreation Center	Less than \$500,000	Improve and expand the playground facilities and designate a space for a community garden at city-owned Eugene Lamb Jr. Recreation Center Extend operating hours and services to include more community activities, like clubs or Softball, and resources like wireless internet	Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP)
Strategy 3.3	Build Midway's first 'Little Library' next to City Hall	Less than \$500	Build a small, bird-house style 'little library' next to Midway City Hall where residents can take a book / leave a book	City-sponsored
	Midway Public Library	Less than \$125,000	Construct a small steel building that operates as a public library located on city property near City Hall	USDA Community Facilities Grant & Loan Program
Strategy 3.4	Downtown Midway Planning Project	\$200,000	Create site plan for redevelopment of 7.5-acre city-owned parcel where City Hall is located to include recreational spaces, family-friendly improvements, small commercial store fronts (if possible), and other improvements	DEO Rural Infrastructure Fund (RIF) Grant

	Downtown Midway Construction Project	Unknown	Implement plan designed in “Downtown Midway Planning Project”	Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
	Establish Midway Mainstreet Organization	N/A	Apply to Florida Mainstreet Program to create Midway Main Street Organization	Apply to Dept. of State (DOS), Division of Historical Resources Main Street Program

GOAL 4. IMPROVE HOUSING

	Project / Action Name	Cost	Description	Funding Options
Strategy 4.1	Apply to the Weatherization Assistance Program	N/A	The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) lowers the monthly utilities cost for low-income households by making houses more energy efficient	City of Midway should contact the Capital Area Community Action Agency (Gadsden County) to begin application: (850) 875-4250
Strategy 4.2	Repair and Rehabilitate Hurricane Michael-damaged Homes	Unknown	Repair / rehabilitate houses that were damaged by Hurricane Michael in 2018	Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR)

Disaster Resiliency

The purpose of this section is to demonstrate how the previous Action Plan can be utilized to improve Midway's resilience to future disasters, such as hurricanes, or economic downturns, such as those caused by the 2008 Recession or COVID-19 Pandemic.

WHAT IS RESILIENCY?

Resiliency is the idea that a community can withstand shocks as well as bounce back better after a disaster.

SHOCK – A shock has a small, but significant negative impact on a community, such as the closure of a small business or brief power outage.

DISASTER– A disaster has a long-term, widespread negative impact on a community, such as a hurricane, pandemic, or the closure of a large businesses.

Many aspects of the Action Plan are designed to improve economic and community resiliency, including using Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds to create hardened structures for city services and repair or rehabilitate houses that were damaged by Hurricane Michael. Repairing the Fire Station #1 facility, expanding sewer systems, and resolving the issue of only one (evacuation) route out of subdivisions can also improve community resiliency.

Key Recommendations

This Economic Development Plan should be reviewed quarterly by City of Midway to identify any progress or areas that need attention. The Plan should also be regularly reviewed by the Midway Citizen's Advisory Committee, who can provide feedback and direction to City of Midway elected officials on its implementation.