ADVANCING IN A NEW DIRECTION

IMPROVING FLOODPLAIN BUYOUTS
**Managed Coastal Retreat**

A Legal Handbook on Shifting Development Away from Vulnerable Areas

Managed Buyouts

The Case for Managed Retreat from Flood Zones

Detention Ponds, Not Homes, Played Host to Recent Flood Event

A report on voluntary property buyouts in the Nation’s floodplains

A Common Ground Solution Serving People at Risk, Taxpayers and the Environment

A Report on Voluntary Property Buyouts in the Nation’s Floodplains

**Higher Ground**

Managed Retreat Strategies

Case Studies:

- Pacific State Beach Adopts Managed Retreat Strategy
- Flood Insurance Assistance for Property Owners

Overviews:

Managed or planned retreat allows the shoreline to advance toward unoccupied, as the dune architecture, buildings, and other infrastructure are either demolished or relocated. Coastal managers realize that in many situations, attempting to stop losses through structural or non-structural solutions is losing battle. Shoreline protection efforts, and/or their repeated maintenance would be too costly and ultimately ineffective at preventing further erosion. A managed retreat approach typically involves establishing thresholds to trigger demolition or relocation of structures threatened by erosion. Therefore, often wherein coastal communities and homeowners may experience some losses or costs, the emerging paradigm of managed retreat encourages people to think long-term, encouraged by the long-term benefits of the entire coastal systems. The phrase ‘managed retreat’ identifies high-risk areas where this type of policy would be best applied. Benefits: Typically less expensive than costly structural stabilization projects that may only be a temporary solution, especially in highly eroded areas. Managed retreat solutions move structures away from the shoreline and enables shoreline habitats to migrate inland as the shoreline erodes to prevent loss of wetlands and other intertidal areas.
A Historical Assessment of Home Buyout Policy: Are We Learning or Just Failing?

A. Greer & S. Binder
Housing Policy Debate
2017
3 WAYS WE COULD DO BETTER

Learn from the past
Consider equity
Create vision
LEARN BUT INNOVATE

Funding
• Charlotte, NC – stormwater fee
• Harris county, TX – fees
• Des Moines, IA – sales tax
• South Carolina – considering a state fund
• California – adaptation fund

PARTICIPATION
• 10% INCENTIVE IF IN HIGH PRIORITY AREA
• 5% INCENTIVE IF MOVE AS BLOCK
• RELOCATE AS NEIGHBORHOOD
• PROPERTY SWITCH (WAPELLO, IA)

Wapello, IA
Levee District 8
2600 acres $2.2M
Wildlife Refuge
1993
MEMORIALS

• JAPANESE TSUNAMI STONES
• NETHERLANDS MUSEUM
• RARE IN US – ZAVAR 2018
EQUITY & COST-EFFECTIVENESS
Low-income neighborhoods more likely to be declared “Substantially damaged” due to Math, Bias, Structure Quality, etc.
DeVries & Fraser 2012

- 51%
- 49%

No retrofit requirements

a) Automatically cost-effective to buyout – FEMA policy
b) If rebuild, must elevate or retrofit

- 51%

More likely to receive buyout offer

More likely to accept buyout offer if $ of retrofit prohibitive; Coercive?

- 49%

Wealthy more likely to appeal

Appeals approved “95%” of time without proof: “fly-by-night, chaotic, wild west, get-what-you-want”
(New Orleans official)
Most vulnerable neighborhoods in the U.S. are low-income and minority (Mileti 1999)

New Orleans: areas proposed for not rebuilding housed 60-80% African American population (Logan 2005)
NOT relocating homes continues history of disproportionate risk

“Trapped” populations – unable financially to relocate (Logan 2005)
Brutal Choice in Houston: Sell Home at a Loss or Face New Floods

By Audra D. S. Burch

March 30, 2018
"Retreat, hell! We're not retreating, we're just advancing in a different direction."
- General Smith
High-density in low-risk areas
national seashore

w/ Rosetta Elkin

D. Stone
Essex Heritage
WE CAN DO BETTER

- **LEARN BUT INNOVATE**
  - Funding, Participation, Execution, Evaluation

- **CONSIDER EQUITY**
  - State decision criteria explicitly → Transparency & Accountability
  - Make decisions at larger geographic scales and longer timelines
  - Address long-term inequality head-on

- **CREATE VISION**
  - Focus on moving TOWARD as well as from
  - Recognize loss
  - Engage in pre-disaster participatory planning