Overview of Recovery Planning Practice

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When disaster strikes, there is already a plan for reconstruction indelibly stamped in the mind of every affected resident—the plan of the pre-disaster city. This is the ‘first’ recovery plan, and all previous plans or new plans made following the disaster will undoubtedly compete, for many residents, with the first plan, oftentimes intensely.

(Haas, Kates, and Bowden, Reconstruction Following Disaster, 1977)
Key Steps in the Recovery Planning Process

- Initiate the Process
- Organize Public Participation
- Conduct Research and Analysis
- Facilitate Input
- Develop and Adopt the Plan
- Implement the Plan
Blogger’s “Flowchart” of New Orleans’ Post-Katrina Planning Process

Source: Alan Gutierrez’ blog, thinknola.com, 2006
Normal City Building Processes, in all Their Complexity, Now Must Happen Much More Quickly

Post-disaster environment consists of a compression of activities in time and focused in space

Source: Olshansky, Hopkins, & Johnson, Natural Hazards Review, August 2012
Recovery is a “complex and urgent process to achieve functionality of socio-ecological systems and adapt to new conditions.”

Consensus definition by participants in Theory of Disaster Recovery Workshop (U.S. National Science Foundation and Public Entity Risk Institute, Nov 2010*)

Value of Post-Disaster Plans and Planning

- Improves the quality and efficiency of the community’s recovery over that of an ad-hoc approach
- Helps reduce uncertainty through the collection and analysis of post-disaster conditions and needs
- Helps make the case for money, show that money will be spent wisely, and justify funds already allocated
- Serves as an important demonstration of leadership to inform and influence stakeholders
- Helps provide the means for public discussion of the future (adapting to the “new normal”) and generate new ideas, elaborate and refine proposals, and assess alternative strategies
Value of Planners in Post-Disaster Recovery Planning

- Acutely aware of the opportunities that the post-disaster environment has created
- Understand the difficult challenges and pre-existing problems that disasters often exacerbate
- Know how to gather, manage and share information—a critical “fuel’ of disaster recovery process)
- Skilled at involving the public in planning and decision-making, and eliciting community-wide views
- Veterans at balancing professional and neighborhood values, the needs of one citizen group vs. another, and citywide vs. neighborhood needs
- Often active in regional planning efforts and thus have valuable experience and relationships for building cooperation and coordination
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Defining Leadership and Collaboration in the Planning Process

- Public and Stakeholder Participation
  - Broader Public Participation
  - Stakeholder Group(s)

- Plan Development
  - Communication and Public Involvement Specialists
  - Planning Team
  - Information and Data Management and Mapping Specialists

- Plan Leadership
  - Lead Planning Agency or Official
  - Local Planning Task Force
  - Planning Liaisons (Federal, State, Regional)

- Authorizing and Approving
  - City Council and/or City Planning Commission
Post-Disaster Planning Approaches

- **Increased planning capacity**: Surge in personnel, data, communication, information systems, meeting rooms, public involvement. This costs money.

- **Decentralized planning**: Many actors planning simultaneously, each creating their own plans, which can communicate to each other.

- **Iterative planning**: Taking some initial actions and making some decisions quickly, and undertaking more things later as more information and extensive analyses are available and deliberation is possible.
Public’s Perception of Disaster Recovery and Government Stems from Their Involvement in the Planning Process

“Citizen participation has a symbolic benefit that may be more important than its instrumental role... If officials minimize the opportunities for participation, citizen support of both government decisions and the legitimacy of government may well decrease.”

(Kweit and Kweit, 2007)
UNOP Planning Process – Meeting Schedule

District/Neighborhood Meetings

- **District Meeting 1:** Confirm/Develop Needs, Visions and Goals
  - October 14

- **District Meeting 2:** Scenarios
  - November 11

- **District Meeting 3:** Draft District Plans
  - December 16-17

- **District Meeting 4:** Final District Plans
  - January 6-7

Citywide Meetings

- **Community Congress #1:** UNOP Recovery Plan Framework
  - October 28

- **Community Congress #2:** UNOP Citywide Recovery Scenarios
  - December 2

- **Community Congress #3:** UNOP Draft Recovery Plan
  - January 13

Final citywide plan to Community Support Organization/New Orleans Community Support Foundation, City Planning Commission, City Council and the Mayor.
“It’s the Vision Thing”

(George W. Bush, 2000 Campaign)
Develop an Overarching Vision

Illustration by Alex Lukas, Next American City, publication 9/17/12
http://americancity.org/forefront/view/when-were-all-urban-planners
Developing an Overarching Vision

- A vision of the “recovered city” should be inspirational, even a challenge to attain, but not so lofty that it seems unrealistic, naïve, or disingenuous.

- It can be a unifying element and motivate the many stakeholders and investors—not just residents, but the general public, donors, state and national political and agency leaders as well.
  - Catalyzing projects: coalesce action and attract and focus outside action and investment
  - Visionary planning outcomes: coalesce a community into a remarkably different future and manage to transcend the dissention, doubt and uncertainty.
Demolition of San Francisco’s Damaged Waterfront Freeway after the 1989 Earthquake
Grand Forks ND/ East Grand Forks, MN River Greenway

- Post-1997 flood voluntary buyout program + levee floodwall construction
- 2,200 acres of land in permanent greenway with parks, campground, 2 golf courses, over 20 miles of multi-purpose trails
- Funds: FEMA-HMGP, CDBG, USACE, State, and local
- Operations and maintenance fee part of monthly utility bill

(Source: City of Grand Forks, 2009)
“It’s about ‘Gearing Up and Sorting Out’ and not ‘Ready, Fire, Aim’”

(Charles Eadie recalling initiation of the Vision Santa Cruz planning process after the 1989 earthquake)
Developing Policy Areas in a Recovery Plan

- Conduct Research and Analysis
  - Consider pre-existing local plans and programs
  - Assess hazards and risks
  - Assess disaster impacts and recovery needs.
  - Assess resources available for recovery and identify gaps.
Developing Policy Areas in a Recovery Plan

- Prioritize recovery issues, analyze scenarios and alternatives
- Formulate a planning framework with potential strategies and specific programs, projects, and actions
Managing Uncertainties as Part of the Planning Process:
(ex. New Orleans Planning Post-Katrina)

- **Uncertainty about repopulation and neighborhood viability**
  - Planning challenge: Demographically-representative citizen participation in the planning process

- **Uncertainty about future flood risk/mitigation**
  - Planning challenge: Public’s willingness to partner in the future management of flood risk (i.e. building elevations, relocations)

- **Uncertainty about funding for rebuilding**
  - Planning challenge: Overcome the doubt and mistrust that residents had in government, and engage in the planning process
New Orleans’ Recovery Plan
Implementation Framework

Increasing Risk of Future Flooding

- Policy Area A – Less flood risk and/or higher repopulation rates
- Policy Area B – Moderate flood risk and/or moderate repopulation rates
- Policy Area C – Highest flood risk and slowest repopulation rates

Increasing Rate of Population Return
Increasing Rate of Flooding
# New Orleans’ Recovery Plan Implementation Framework

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Area C</th>
<th>Policy Area B</th>
<th>Policy Area A</th>
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<td><strong>0 - 2 yrs</strong></td>
<td><strong>2 - 5 yrs</strong></td>
<td><strong>&gt; 5 yrs</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>■ Stabilize neighborhoods and help rebuild together safely</td>
<td>■ Help returning residents and businesses with elevation</td>
<td>■ Ensure residents can fund individual flood protection</td>
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<tr>
<td>■ Use modular or temporary facilities to provide full coverage</td>
<td>■ Repair major infrastructure</td>
<td>■ Accommodate additional residents and businesses</td>
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<tr>
<td>■ Continue neighborhood stabilization</td>
<td>■ Help slow-recovery neighborhoods rebuild together</td>
<td>■ Repair major infrastructure</td>
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<tr>
<td>■ Invest in permanent infrastructure</td>
<td>■ Improve infrastructure scalable to population and resettlement</td>
<td>■ Restore permanent facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>■ Re-vision public services and amenities</td>
<td>■ Re-vision public services and amenities</td>
<td>■ Improve infrastructure to spur revitalization and accommodate additional population</td>
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<td>■ Complete reconstruction and revision of services and amenities</td>
<td>■ Complete reconstruction and revision of services and amenities</td>
<td>■ Initiate re-visioning of public services and amenities</td>
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<td>■ Complete reconstruction and re-vision of public services and amenities</td>
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Additional “Tips” for Establishing Policies and Priority Projects

- Design meaningful discussions of alternatives
- Balance communicating the big picture with an astute focus on priority issues.
- Work toward a consensus for both the recovery priorities and desired outcomes as well as the set of strategies adopted to achieve that vision
- Recognize the psychological and emotional challenges that participants are enduring.
Recovery Plan Implementation Issues

Local government has “the primary role of planning and managing all aspects of the community’s recovery.”

(FEMA, National Disaster Recovery Framework, 2011)
Recovery Management Organization

- No set formula for the design and authorities of a local recovery management organization
- National Disaster Recovery Framework recommends appointing a Local Disaster Recovery Manager (LDRM) to:
  - Lead in creation of local recovery organization and initiatives and to coordinate their activities, including planning
  - Work with state and federal recovery partners in damage and impact assessments, prioritizing recovery issues and needs, identification of recovery funding sources, measure recovery progress, and ensure effective and consistent communication with stakeholders and the public
- Leadership for recovery management needs to come from the top of local government
Integrate and Leverage the Recovery Strategy for Sustainability and Consistency

- The recovery plan goals, policies, and recommendations must also be integrated into other local plans and regulations:
  - Comprehensive plan
  - Hazard mitigation plan
  - Capital improvements plan
  - Emergency operations plan
  - Land use, subdivision and zoning controls
  - Building regulations

- Some may need to be developed and considered in stages after the plan is formally adopted.
Utilize an Array of Implementation Strategies

- **Timeline strategies** – understand and integrate the time-serial or sequential nature of the recovery process—short-term versus long-term—and specific recovery programs and projects.

- **Spatial strategies** – have a more geographic focus.

- **Systematic strategies** – are often taken by agencies with a system or set of similar or integrated facilities, infrastructure, and other physical assets damaged by disaster.
Implementation as a Community Enterprise

- Understand that non-governmental organizations, both formal and informal, will emerge in post-disaster recovery and embrace them into the implementation process.
- Formalize multi-governmental partnerships for recovery.
- Formalize public-private partnerships for recovery.
- Build, staff, and maintain a robust information and communication infrastructure for recovery.
Managing Post-Disaster Recovery Finances

- Understand the overall fiscal and economic impact of the disaster.
- Develop a comprehensive recovery implementation financing strategy (local, state, federal, private and philanthropic sources).
- Ensure transparent, inclusive, and accountable approaches to local recovery financing.
Measure Recovery Progress and Success

“The community successfully overcomes the physical, emotional and environmental impacts of the disaster. It reestablishes an economic and social base that instills confidence in the community members and businesses regarding community viability. It rebuilds by integrating the functional needs of all residents and reducing its vulnerability to all hazards facing it. The entire community demonstrates a capability to be prepared, responsive, and resilient in dealing with the consequences of disasters.”

(FEMA, National Disaster Recovery Framework, 2011)
Value of Planners in Recovery Implementation

- Recommend sites for interim housing or businesses, changes in land uses, hazard mitigation, and any new standards for rebuilding
- Designate redevelopment project areas and prepare redevelopment plans
- Expedite review of land use applications as part of rebuilding, this includes environmental review
- Enforce or recommend exceptions to planning regulations, such as architectural and design guidelines, non-conforming uses, and historic preservation
- Oversee use powers of eminent domain to acquire and assemble heavily-damaged or addressing blighted properties
- Aid in recovery financing, grant application preparation, grant distribution and fund management
Thank you!

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