

Session 11

Holistic Disaster Recovery: Creating a More Sustainable Future

Impediments to a Sustainable Recovery (Part II)

Time: 3 hours

(Slide 11-1)

Objectives:

- 11.1 Discuss the lack of recovery planning at the federal, state and local level**
 - 11.2 Exam 2**
-

Scope:

The lack of planning prior to during and after a disaster significantly limits the degree to which sustainable recovery can occur. Planning can take multiple forms, including immediate strategic planning, adaptive planning and long-term comprehensive recovery planning. This session will focus on how the lack of planning before, during and after a disaster impedes sustainable recovery. Following the completion of objective 11.1, the take home exam will be discussed.

Required Reading

Student Readings:

Kartez, Jack and Michael Lindell. 1987. Planning for Uncertainty: The Case of Local Disaster Planning. *American Planning Association Journal* 53: 487-498.

Kartez, Jack and Charles Faupel. 1994. *Comprehensive Hazard Management and the Role of Cooperation Between Local Planning Departments and Emergency Management Offices*. Unpublished Paper.

Spangle and Associates with Robert Olsen Associates, Inc. 1997. *The Recovery and Reconstruction Plan of the City of Los Angeles: Evaluation of Its Use After the Northridge Earthquake*. Portola Valley, California: Spangle Associates.¹

Instructor Reading:

Godschalk, David R., Timothy Beatley, Philip Berke, David J. Brower, and Edward J. Kaiser. 1999. Chapter 9. State Hazard Mitigation Plans: Falling Short of Their Potential. Pp. 327-392. In *Natural Hazards Mitigation: Recasting Disaster Policy and Planning*. Washington, D.C.: Island Press.

11.1 Discuss the lack of recovery planning at the federal, state and local level

Remarks:

The role of planning for recovery and reconstruction necessitates that the federal government, states and communities, in fact, plan. The willingness and quality of state and local recovery planning varies widely across the United States. At the federal level, recovery planning processes are tied to the short-term administration of grant programs rather than an established means of fostering long-term sustainable recovery in states and communities impacted by disaster. Thus the question arises, why do federal, state and local emergency management organizations fail to plan for recovery?

(Slide 11-2)

Why do federal, state and local emergency management organizations fail to effectively plan for recovery?

Salience. At the state and local government level agencies regularly perform a balancing act, addressing those issues that they deem most salient.

- Disasters are typically low frequency high magnitude events.
 - Pre-disaster recovery planning may compete with the day-to-day operational planning activities of local governments.
 - This is particularly true in areas that do not regularly experience disasters. Adaptive planning following disasters is frequently the result (Kartez and Lindell 1987).

¹ The document can be obtained by contacting Spangle and Associates at 3240 Alpine Road, Portola Valley, California 94028.

- In some cases, citizens and government officials may mistakenly develop a false sense of security following a major event, believing that an event of similar magnitude may not occur for an extended period of time.
- Anecdotal evidence suggests that in states, such as California, which experience a high number of disasters, local governments may be more willing to enact disaster recovery plans.
 - This may be due to mandated planning requirements, or in the case of California, a more comprehensive list of disaster reconstruction provisions (Tyler, O'Prey and Kristiansson 2002).² However, hazard vulnerability is not necessarily a predictor of the willingness of communities to develop pre-disaster plans (Drabek 1986).
- In other, less vulnerable locations, it is more difficult to convince officials to develop a plan for infrequently occurring events.
- Kartez and Lindell (1987) found that a number of studies suggest that communities fail to improve existing plans, even following disasters. Berke, Beatley and Wilhite (1989) found that disaster experience had little effect on their adoption of mitigation measures.

(Slide 11-3)

Inter-governmental impediments. Planning processes that are normally used to tackle other community issues may not be utilized when a disaster occurs.

- Much of this can be traced to the fact that planners, responsible for local land use planning, do not regularly interact, nor coordinate with local emergency managers, who are responsible for initial response and early recovery duties, and are typically assigned to create pre-disaster plans (Kartez and Faupel 1994).
- Due in large part to the fact that most planners and emergency managers do not regularly interact, they are not fully aware that their combined skills are critically important to crafting a sustainable recovery.

² California communities are required to incorporate pre-event planning into response and recovery plans (Geis 1996).

(Slide 11-4)

- The lack of inter-departmental coordination has several negative effects. They include:
 - ***Planners may not participate in the recovery process.*** Failing to involve planners can significantly limit the breadth of recovery.
Specific ways in which planners can aid in recovery include:
 - Planners are trained to take a broad view of a community and assess how the various physical, economic, aesthetic and geographic features fit together as part of a larger whole;
 - Planners are accustomed to identifying grant programs to address community needs; and
 - Planners are trained in the practice of plan making.
 - ***Local emergency managers, who tend to be involved in response and immediate recovery, are often less comfortable addressing issues associated with long-term recovery and reconstruction.***

(Slide 11-5)

Specific ways in which local emergency managers can aid in recovery include:

- Local emergency managers have direct relationships with the State and federal emergency management officials, which play an important role in the identification and provision of aid and technical recovery planning assistance;
- Local emergency managers are familiar with the coordination of emergency and disaster response activities, including the creation of disaster response plans.
- Local emergency managers are usually in charge of conducting preliminary damage assessments, which represent some of the earliest information necessary to identify community needs and provides important baseline data that can be used in the recovery planning process.

(Slide 11-6)

The benefits of recovery planning are not widely known. In the emergency management field, response plans, and to a growing extent mitigation plans, are recognized as providing tangible benefits. Their benefits have been documented and disseminated to practitioners. Recovery planning, however, is still viewed by many practitioners as a process that is not clearly linked to specific benefits.

- The greatest reason for this disconnect may lie in the fact that the current federal recovery system is dominated by a disconnected collection of recovery programs instead of a broader set of policies guiding a sustainable recovery (May 1985).
 - If the Federal Recovery Plan does not effectively outline specific steps that should be taken by the federal government to affect a sound, sustainable recovery, why should states and local governments be expected to develop a recovery planning process?³
- In the research community, recovery is still the least understood aspect of emergency management. However, there is strong evidence to suggest planning can, in fact, improve performance across response (Tierney, et. al. 2001), mitigation (Burby and Dalton, 1994, Godschalk et. al. 1999), and recovery (Schwab, et. al 1998).
 - From a research standpoint, pre-disaster recovery planning benefits are still somewhat anecdotal, based primarily on post-disaster cases studies (Spangle and Associates, Schwab, et. al. 1998).
 - The basic question - Do recovery plans lead to a more effective recovery? - has not been systematically studied using quantitatively methods.
 - As research findings are published, a better means of disseminating this information to the practitioner in the field should be developed. Otherwise, the results are not likely to affect needed changes in behavior.⁴

³ As noted later in Session 12, the Federal Response Plan does contain a “recovery annex”, yet it does not effectively identify the means needed to coordinate recovery programs, nor outline a coherent strategy for states or local governments to achieve a sustainable recovery.

⁴ The role of academia in recovery will be discussed in greater detail in Session 14: Future Trends and Implications.

(Slide 11-7)

Governmental incentives are not provided to create recovery plans. If recovery planning is important, and provides real benefits, how can mechanisms be developed that encourage stakeholders to plan for recovery? Mandating planning is one option. Another approach includes the development of specific benefits linked to the creation of a recovery plan. **Examples may include:**

- Federal recognition of states and local governments that develop plans meeting established standards;
- Clearly articulating the benefits of recovery planning to states and local governments through the use of training and outreach programs. **These efforts may include:**
 - The use of specific examples of communities that have benefited from developing a recovery pre-disaster; and
 - Testimonials from local government officials can prove particularly effective.
- Providing an increased level of programmatic autonomy for states and local governments that have developed recovery plans meeting an established standard⁵;

(Slide 11-8)

- Providing federal or state funding to develop recovery plans that meet established standards;
- Providing additional federal or state disaster assistance to communities that have a recovery plan in place at the time of a disaster that meets established standards; and
- Reducing the non-federal cost share in those communities that have adopted a recovery plan that meets established standards.

⁵ FEMA has applied this concept to both state hazard mitigation and floodplain mapping programs. The managing state designation allows state emergency management officials to assume greater responsibilities regarding the administration of mitigation grant and planning programs. The Cooperating Technical Partnership designation allows local and state government's greater autonomy in the development of Flood Insurance Rate Maps.

(Slide 11-9)

Governments are not mandated to develop recovery plans. In many instances, researchers have argued that planning mandates are necessary to solicit the development of plans (Burby, et. al 1997). However, plan quality may suffer, unless a degree of commitment is established and nurtured (Dalton and Burby 1994, Berke and French 1994). This applies to federal, state and local levels of government.

- There is currently no federal recovery planning mandate. With the passage of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, states and local governments are required to develop mitigation plans in order to receive pre and post-disaster mitigation funding. This type of federal mandate does not exist for recovery plans.
- FEMA has developed very little guidance on this important task nor are staff adequately trained to provide this type of assistance to states or local governments in the field prior to or following a disaster.
- Most states do not possess a recovery plan and very few local governments have developed a recovery plan.
 - In most cases, recovery planning is undertaken in those jurisdictions that face significant hazard vulnerability or have developed a plan post-disaster.

(Slide 11-10)

Governments believe that the tasks associated with recovery are too costly, time consuming or technically challenging. Recovery planning need not be a costly or technically challenging process. Rather, recovery plans should reflect existing capabilities while identifying areas of potential improvement.

- Initially, recovery plans should focus on the identification of specific post-disaster tasks and their assignment to individuals responsible for their implementation.
- Developing a recovery plan is an ongoing process and a means to clarify roles and responsibilities following a disaster.
- In order to address this concern, FEMA and State Emergency Management Agencies need to develop adequate training materials and conduct regular seminars on how to develop a recovery plan.

Capability. The responsibility for planning for recovery falls primarily on local governments, yet they are typically the least able to implement recovery programs, due in part to their lack of experience and the need to coordinate across local government agencies post-disaster.

- The federal government, which has access to the greatest resources (staff, funding, etc.) has not effectively developed the means to systematically train state and local officials how to effectively plan for recovery.

(Slide 11-11)

Clear assignment of responsibilities. All federal, state and local emergency management organizations recognize that one of their primary responsibilities is to respond to emergencies and disasters. Responsibilities associated with mitigation and disaster recovery are less clear.

- While FEMA and State Offices of Emergency Management have personnel assigned to mitigation and recovery-related activities, local emergency management offices vary in the degree to which they address mitigation and recovery.
- At the local level, emergency managers and land use planners do not effectively communicate nor understand how their roles can significantly overlap, particularly in the context of mitigation and recovery (Kartez and Faupel 1994).
- Of those staff assigned mitigation and recovery duties at the federal and state levels, most are responsible for managing federal grant programs rather than planning-related activities per se.⁶

(Slide 11-12)

The results of failing to plan for recovery

The lack of recovery planning results in numerous missed opportunities. Differing opportunities may arise across the recovery process. They are listed below.

- ***The lack of pre-disaster planning may impede sustainable recovery at the federal, state and local level in the following ways:***
 - Reduced coordination of resources, including technical expertise, grant funding and materials needed to rebuild a community (this includes inter and intra-organizational coordination – see session on shared governance);
 - Failing to identify complimentary community objectives established pre-disaster with the needs identified post-event (e.g. sustainability, hazard mitigation, etc.);

⁶ This has changed recently, as the Disaster Mitigation Act has more effectively held states and local governments accountable for failing to generate mitigation plans.

- A slowed recovery;
- Slowed reconstruction due to inefficient permitting and inspection procedures; and
- Failure to incorporate mitigation into post-disaster reconstruction.

(Slide 11-13)

- **The *lack of planning during the immediate aftermath of a disaster* may impede sustainable recovery at the federal, state and local level in the following ways:**
 - Increased loss of life or injuries;
 - Failure to obtain all available grant funding (following a federally-declared disaster); and
 - Uncoordinated state and federal response efforts, including a failure to identify post-disaster mitigation and sustainable recovery opportunities during preliminary damage assessments.

(Slide 11-14)

- **The *lack of planning during the long-term recovery from a disaster* may impede sustainable recovery at the federal, state and local level in the following ways:**
 - Replacing at-risk infrastructure as it was prior to the disaster;
 - New construction in known high hazard areas (resulting in no net reduction of risk); and
 - Failing to implement local, state or federal changes in policy that impede sustainable recovery.

(Slide 11-15)

Class Discussion

The instructor should facilitate a discussion regarding the pros and cons of planning mandates versus incentives. **Specific questions addressed include:**

- Based on class readings, course lecture and past class exercises, which approach do you believe would be more effective and why?
- **List pros and cons of each approach. Specific answers may include:**
 - *Mandates*
 - Pros
 - Recognized requirement with know penalties and benefits;
 - Helps to establish standardized level of performance; and
 - Requires government action.
 - Cons
 - Unfunded mandates cause significant inter-government friction; and
 - Increased administrative staffing requirement to monitor the development and evaluation of plans.

(Slide 11-16)

- *Incentives*
 - Pros
 - Allows governments additional latitude to develop plans that meet unique local needs; and
 - May facilitate enhanced inter-governmental relationships.
 - Cons
 - May result in limited participation; and
 - Plan quality may suffer.

(Slide 11-17)

- If plan mandates are established how do you propose to initiate and sustain the program? More specifically, what approach would you use to implement this program? **Examples may include:**
 - Developing a national recovery planning training program;
 - Educate FEMA staff or contractors to conduct training
 - Initiate nation wide training effort
 - Establish specific recovery planning guidelines;
 - Provide federal funding to develop recovery plans; and
 - Establish tangible benefits for those that develop approved recovery plans.
 - Coordinate potential benefits package with other willing federal agencies (e.g. Housing and Urban Development, Small Business Administration, Environmental Protection Agency, etc.).
-

11.2

Exam 2

(Slide 11-18)

The instructor should conduct a take home essay exam addressing topics discussed to this point. **Questions may include:**

- Based on assigned readings and class discussion, describe the role of vertical and horizontal integration in achieving a sustainable recovery. Your answer should include specific examples of both vertical and horizontal integration and how they are interrelated.
- Describe the context of post-disaster decision making. You are encouraged to review past readings and lectures in order to explain how decision making is affected by past experience, the scope of the disaster, access to power, etc. Choose three key factors (other than the three listed above) influencing post-disaster decision making and describe how they are interrelated. In addition, you should describe which factor you believe to be most influential and why.
- Based on your personal experiences and observations during the *role playing exercise*, what do you believe is the key factor limiting sustainable disaster recovery? Provide specific examples uncovered during the exercise. Support your answer with assigned readings and materials discussed in class.

- Based on your personal experiences and observations during the *case study exercise*, what do you believe is the what do you believe is the key factor limiting sustainable disaster recovery? Provide specific examples uncovered during the exercise. Support your answer with assigned readings and materials discussed in class.
- Describe what you believe to be the most significant impediment to a sustainable recovery. Provide at least three specific examples of how a sustainable recovery is compromised as a result.

(Slide 11-19)

Remarks: Exam questions should be handed out at the end of Session 11 and returned by students to the instructor at the beginning of class the following week. Prior to dismissing class Session 11, the instructor should field questions from students regarding the exam. The instructor should discuss the weight of the exam and how it fits into the overall course grade.

(Slide 11-20)

Student Instructions: Students should answer three of the five questions. Students should answer either question 3 or 4 depending on whether they participated in the role playing or case study exercise. Answers should emphasize materials covered in the class lectures and assigned readings. Answers should be typed and double spaced, in order to ease the review of each answer and provide space for comments.

References:

- Berke, Philip, T. Beatley and S. Wilhite. 1989. Influences on Local Adoption of Planning Measures for Earthquake Hazard Mitigation. *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters* 7: 33-56.
- Berke, Phillip, and Steven French. 1994. The Influence of State Planning Mandates on Local Plan Quality. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*. Vol. 13. No. 4. pp.237-250.
- Burby, Raymond and Linda Dalton. 1994. Plans Can Matter! The Role of Land Use and State Planning Mandates in Limiting Development of Hazardous Areas. *Public Administration Review*. Vol. 54, No. 3. pp.229-238.
- Burby, Raymond, and Peter May, with Phillip Berke, Linda Dalton, Steven French and Edward Kaiser. 1997. *Making Governments Plan*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Dalton, Linda and Raymond Burby. 1994. Mandates, Plans and Planners: Building Local Commitment to Development Management. *Journal of the American Planning Association*. Vol. 60 (autumn) pp. 444-462.
- Drabek, T.E. 1986. *Human System Responses to Disaster: An Inventory of Sociological Findings*. New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Geis, Donald. E. 1996. *Creating Sustainable and Disaster Resistant Communities*. Aspen, Colorado: The Aspen Global Change Institute.
- Godschalk, David R., Timothy Beatley, Philip Berke, David J. Brower, and Edward J. Kaiser. 1999. *Natural Hazards Mitigation: Recasting Disaster Policy and Planning*. Washington, D.C.: Island Press.
- Kartez, Jack and Michael Lindell. 1987. Planning for Uncertainty: The Case of Local Disaster Planning. *American Planning Association Journal* 53: 487-498.
- Kartez, Jack and Charles Faupel. 1994. *Comprehensive Hazard Management and the Role of Cooperation Between Local Planning Departments and Emergency Management Offices*. Unpublished Paper.
- Schwab, Jim, Kenneth C. Topping, Charles Eadie, Robert Deyle and Richard Smith. 1998. *Planning for Post-Disaster Recovery and Reconstruction*. PAS Report 483/484, Chicago, Illinois: American Planning Association.

Spangle and Associates. 1991. *Rebuilding After Earthquakes: Lessons From Planners*. Portola Valley, California: William Spangle and Associates.

Tierney, Kathleen, Michael Lindell and Ronald Perry. 2001. *Facing the Unexpected: Disaster Preparedness and Response in the United States*. Washington, D.C.: Joseph Henry Press.

Tyler, Martha, Katherine O'Prey and Karen Kristiansson. 2002. *Redevelopment After Earthquakes*. Portola Valley, California: Spangle Associates.