



FEMA

# Building Community Resilience by Integrating Hazard Mitigation Planning for Post-Disaster Redevelopment

The purpose of a post-disaster redevelopment or recovery plan is to facilitate pre-disaster planning in a way that guides long-term recovery efforts (five years or more) following a disaster. There are a number of reasons to plan for long-term recovery before a disaster occurs, including:

- **Planning ahead.** Redevelopment is too complex an issue to address in the midst of a disaster response or during the immediate post-disaster recovery process. A community's attention and resources will likely be committed to more pressing needs, and stakeholders will likely not have the time or ability to engage in a long-term planning effort. Planning in advance provides the opportunity to properly integrate hazard mitigation into redevelopment and recovery with sufficient time to explore, discuss, and address the issues.
- **Rebuilding resilient.** Rebuilding damaged structures or infrastructure in the same location and/or in the same way may leave the community at risk from similar disaster losses in the future. Hazard mitigation measures such as property protection and hazard avoidance should be considered when rebuilding or repairing damaged structures.
- **Focusing long-term.** Disasters can force business closures, displace residents and have lasting effects on the vitality of a community. Understanding and addressing these social and economic drivers, along with their existing dependencies and vulnerabilities, can support the community in its mitigation and post-disaster redevelopment efforts.
- **Implementing the vision.** Disasters may present opportunities to target investments that help achieve a long-term community vision.



FEMA/Robert Kaufmann



FEMA/Jennifer Smits

“Without a comprehensive, long-term recovery plan, ad hoc efforts in the aftermath of a significant disaster will delay the return of community stability. Creating a process to make smart post-disaster decisions and prepare for long-term recovery requirements enables a community to do more than react...”

*Florida Department of Community Affairs and Florida Division of Emergency Management, Post-Disaster Redevelopment Planning: A Guide for Florida Communities*

## Integrating Hazard Mitigation into Redevelopment Plan Elements

The community's post-disaster redevelopment plan can identify roles and responsibilities of key people, departments, and agencies; address the need for temporary regulations such as post-disaster building moratoria; address potential impacts to historic resources; address potential impacts to non-conforming uses; and address location and other provisions for temporary housing.

In addition, a recovery plan can seek to integrate long-term hazard mitigation, public safety, and resilience goals, including:

- **Profiling and mapping hazard risks.** This can help synchronize geospatial hazard analysis and mapping efforts, leading to better informed policy recommendations. This information can also be utilized by emergency operations and response personnel in order to better understand hazard impacts as events unfold.
- **Establishing a safety or hazards element in the comprehensive or general plan.** A separate public safety or hazards element can be added to the comprehensive plan, or a “checklist” or matrix might be considered for inclusion as an appendix to the plan to track where and how hazard mitigation is integrated throughout each element. This facilitates better coordination between land use and emergency planners, and ensures that hazard profiles and mapping information are integrated into the land use planning process.
- **Using land use, zoning, subdivision, and other development regulations.** These tools can be instrumental in guiding growth to safer areas while limiting development in known hazard areas. A community's hazard profile should always be considered when making land use or development decisions.
- **Protecting or restoring natural areas.** This can maintain a buffer or other mitigating effects, such as flood storage, while directing growth to less environmentally sensitive and/or hazard prone areas.
- **Using capital improvement programs to fund safety measures.** This can also aid in guiding safe growth and establishing road improvements or other measures intended to facilitate continuity of passage, evacuation, and other essential community needs in the event of a disaster.



FEMA/Jennifer Smits