



Planning For a Resilient Community: A 4-Hour Workshop For Planners

A critical connection exists between the impacts of natural hazards and the design and function of a community. Planners can mitigate the negative effects of natural hazards and improve resiliency in their community through a number of different tools. A resilient community:

- Makes proactive investment and policy decisions;
- Communicates risk and vulnerability to all;
- Builds public and private sector capabilities and partnerships; and
- Resumes normal operations and recovers rapidly after hazard events.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) offers a workshop on planning for resilient communities.

Workshop Purpose and Organization

The purpose of this workshop is to enhance the effectiveness of community planners and officials in creating safe, resilient communities through hazard mitigation. The workshop focuses on the relationship between the impacts of hazards and community design and provides specific examples of how communities accomplish mitigation through comprehensive planning, transportation planning, zoning, and other planning mechanisms. Participants will improve their skills in developing and implementing mitigation plans and identify key planning issues they may face during disaster recovery.

This workshop provides an overview of the mitigation planning process and discusses the role of community planners in risk reduction, including how planners and community officials can facilitate the planning process, assess existing and future vulnerabilities, assess community capabilities, and identify potential solutions. This workshop also addresses how planners can help implement mitigation actions and undertake planning during disaster recovery.

Hazard Mitigation and Community Resilience

Hazard mitigation is the effort to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters.

Resilience is the capacity of individuals, communities, businesses, institutions, and governments to adapt to changing conditions and to prepare for, withstand, and rapidly recover from disruptions to everyday life, such as hazard events.

Hazard mitigation planning is the foundation of community resilience because it encourages the development of a long-term mitigation strategy. By going through the planning process, communities think about their risks and develop mitigation actions and projects before a disaster even has a chance of occurring, making it easier to recover from future events.



Learning Objectives

At the end of this course, participants will be able to:

- Identify the role of the community planner in making communities more resilient;
- Strengthen connections between mitigation and the goals of other local plans; and
- Explain the value of mitigation in improving community resilience.

Target Audience

This course is designed for community, urban, and regional planners and community officials.

Prerequisites

The course is open to anyone with an interest in mitigation planning. However, because the course does not present basic information about a participatory process or developing a plan, a general to thorough understanding of planning theory and planning processes facilitates understanding of the material presented.

Why Should Planners Care?

Planners are an important connection to how communities are designed and developed. By keeping hazards in mind, they can:

- Identify policies and actions that will permanently reduce the risk of damage and loss.
- Improve the welfare of people and their communities.
- Enhance the ability of communities to recover from disasters.
- Establish partnerships for community resilience.

What Can Planners Do?

- Plan: Participate in the development of mitigation plans.
- Mitigate: Integrate policies and implement actions.
- Advocate: Champion mitigation goals and principles.

Resources and Additional Information

FEMA provides a variety of guidance, tools, and resources to help communities develop hazard mitigation plans. These resources and more can be found online at: www.fema.gov/hazard-mitigation-planning-resources.

- [Hazard mitigation planning laws, regulations, and policies](#) guide development of state, local, and tribal FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plans. The [Local Mitigation Plan Review Guide](#) provides guidance for Federal and state officials responsible for reviewing local mitigation plans meet the requirements.
- The [Local Mitigation Planning Handbook](#) is the official guide for governments to develop, update, and implement local plans.
- [Integrating Hazard Mitigation Into Local Planning: Case Studies and Tools for Community Officials \(2013\)](#) makes the case for integrating hazard mitigation and provides practical tips on how to insert mitigation and resilience into community planning.

Visit www.fema.gov/hazard-mitigation-planning-training or contact your [FEMA Regional Office](#) for more information on available online and in-person mitigation planning training.

"FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards."