DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Phase IV: Long-Term Recovery

Webinar Series

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Presenter

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Building Back Stronger

Keys to Effective Long-Term Disaster Recovery

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Prioritize Permanent Repairs

- Repair or replace damaged public facilities, utilities, transportation networks, and essential services

    - Perform detailed inspections of all damaged infrastructure.

    - Use GIS mapping and drone technology for faster, accurate assessments.

    - Prioritize critical facilities (e.g., hospitals, water plants, police/fire stations).

- Expedite the restoration of educational and healthcare facilities

University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education & Hotel
(Photo by Andrew Davis Tucker/UGA)

Implement Hazard Mitigation

- Use FEMA funding opportunities to reduce future disaster risks.

- Strengthen infrastructure to withstand potential hazards.

Reassess and Update Plans

- Review and update hazard mitigation plans and emergency operations plans.

- Develop continuity strategies for maintaining government operations.

City of Savannah Floodplain Mitigation Plan Approved Plan 2021

Administer FEMA Public Assistance Programs

- Collaborate with FEMA to document and finalize eligible recovery projects.

    **Document projects properly

- Ensure all projects meet FEMA requirements, including procurement standards and environmental regulations.

FEMA Public Assistance Program & Policy Guide January 2025

Documenting for FEMA

- Track **ALL** response actions (e.g. photos, logs)
- Expense documentation begins on **Day 1**
- ICS-214 forms, GPS data, receipts, staff time
- Tie **ALL** expenses to approved protective actions

Engage the Community

- Host community meetings to gather input on rebuilding priorities and long-term goals.

- Provide resources and assistance for rebuilding homes and businesses.

Georgia residents are rescued from flooding caused by Hurricane Helene last fall. John Spink/TNS

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Monitor Economic Recovery

- Assist businesses in reopening and provide incentives for economic growth.

- Rebuild attractions and public spaces to restore tourism revenue.

Valdosta, Lowndes County
Hurricane Helene Devastates Georgia's Forests: A Long Road to Recovery

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Evaluate and Strengthen Resilience

- Conduct after-action reviews to analyze response and recovery efforts.

- Develop programs to enhance community resilience.

Maintain Transparency and Accountability

- Provide regular updates to residents and stakeholders about recovery milestones
    - Public reporting, dashboards
    - Track milestones and financial integrity

- Ensure financial accountability and compliance with FEMA funding requirements.

Plan for Future Disasters

- Invest in training, equipment, and resources for future emergencies.

- Educate residents and businesses on disaster preparedness and mitigation strategies.

Evaluate Long-Term Recovery Success

- Measure recovery success by monitoring infrastructure restoration, economic stability, and community well-being.

- Share results with stakeholders and celebrate recovery achievements.

Key Tools & Resources

Table 3: Post-disaster Recovery Planning

Planning Activities	Examples
Organizational Framework	▪ Identify an individual or group as well as supporting structures required to lead the process. ▪ Coordinate with all community leaders to ensure participation and validity of the process. ▪ Identify outside resources, financial and technical, that provide support to the overall recovery effort.
Needs Assessment	▪ Leverage existing recovery plans and mitigation plans as foundational documents. ▪ Assess the need created by the disaster to determine where recovery issues are present (e.g., community, economy, housing, health, education, social, infrastructure, natural, cultural). ▪ Determine areas of focus for building future resilience through mitigation and adaptation opportunities and the impact these areas have on recovery. ▪ Identify areas that strengthen and revitalize the community, and areas of opportunity in recovery planning.
Partnership Engagement	▪ Solicit public participation in the development and confirmation of the vision and goals. Establish an accessible process for exchanging information between the public and leadership. ▪ Develop a communications map to ensure all sectors of the community are engaged in the process, to include using non-traditional communications outlets to reach as much of the community as possible. ▪ Ensure effective communications for all participants, including individuals with disabilities and individuals with limited English proficiency. ▪ Emphasize transparent and open communication by providing drafts to partners and community members, with a recognition that plans will need be iterative.
Develop and Document the Recovery Vision and Goals	▪ Document the vision, goals, projects, and programs. ▪ Develop projects and programs – to include schedules and milestones to meet the recovery vision and goals created by the community. ▪ Identify key leaders responsible for undertaking next steps or moving recovery strategies forward and determine the implementation plan and priorities for recovery projects. ▪ Use existing public and private resources and new funding streams to creatively package resources. For example, projects can be phased for flexible application of funding. ▪ Evaluate projects and programs to determine their impact on recovery, feasibility, public support, effective use of resources and other criteria as determined by the community.
Continuous Improvement	▪ Revise plans as needed to meet changing recovery needs and priorities. ▪ Continue to update and engage the broader partner population on next steps. ▪ Monitor progress and convey achievements to all partners.

FEMA Natural Disaster Recovery Framework Third Edition (2024)

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Key Tools & Resources

Table 4: Strategies for Measuring Progress Through Data

Strategies for Measuring Progress	Examples
Technology and Systems	▪ Identify and access data to inform pre-disaster recovery planning from appropriate federal, state, local, and nongovernmental sources, such as those managed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Census Bureau, and/or state emergency management agencies. ▪ Identify community engagement tools to solicit feedback from community and recovery partners, such as SurveyMonkey, to conduct needs assessments and measure satisfaction with recovery efforts. ▪ Identify and establish systems that track pre-disaster baseline conditions, including Geographic Information System (GIS) tools like Environmental Systems Research Institute's Aeronautical Reconnaissance Coverage GIS and/or Quantum GIS. ▪ Leverage technology and systems innovations to achieve goals that result in greater information sharing, accountability, and transparency.
Key Indicators	▪ Ensure full community participation in developing metrics in coordination with partners. ▪ Establish indicators to recovery priorities and resource needs and set realistic expectations and milestones for community members, partners, and participating agencies and organizations.
Continuous Improvement	▪ Ensure continuous improvement by evaluating the effectiveness of recovery activities and associated metrics. ▪ Encourage government agencies and private organizations that provide assistance to have a system of tracking their coordination and assistance efforts, ensuring accountability, and enabling prompt adjustments to meet ongoing and changing needs.

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"Recovery is not just about rebuilding—it's about preparing better for next time."

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Summary-Long Term Recovery

- **Repair & Restore** critical infrastructure, public services, and facilities
- **Mitigate Future Risks** through updated plans and resilient infrastructure
- **Document & Comply** with FEMA requirements from Day 1
- **Engage the Community** in setting priorities and rebuilding efforts
- **Support Economic Recovery** with business assistance and tourism revitalization
- **Ensure Transparency** with public updates, financial tracking, and progress reporting

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References

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- **GEMA**. (2023). *Georgia Disaster Recovery and Redevelopment Plan* https://gema.georgia.gov/document/document/gadrrp-2023executed-1/download

- **FEMA**. Long-Term Community Recovery Planning Process: A Self-Help Guide https://www.fema.gov/pdf/rebuild/ltrc/selfhelp.pdf