



Hazard Reduction & Recovery Center

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“Adaptive Planning for Disaster Recovery & Resiliency”

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A logical first step to support resiliency during high uncertainty and fast change is a pre-disaster recovery plan that looks at how a community should be redeveloped. Compared with common planning approaches, disaster recovery planning needs to improve the probability for disaster resiliency by putting more attention on conditions of high uncertainty, rapid change, and complicatedness. This study examines local recovery plan quality and the influence of the choices that planners make to improve the quality of recovery plans in the context of public indifference about future disaster events.

Findings

This study combines the principles of plan quality with a new model of adaptive planning to guide an assessment of 87 local disaster recovery plans. The study also draws on literature to look at the impacts of decisions made by planners. The study finds that less than one-third of local jurisdictions that are at risk adopted disaster recovery plans that met the researchers' minimal standard for inclusion. Stronger plans result from a collaborative network of stakeholders that are first determined on reordering priorities. The study concludes that the overall low plan quality scores for both direction setting and action-oriented principles show that the plans will not create local resiliency during post-disaster recovery.

Implications

Local recovery planning should be designed to work under conditions of high uncertainty. The overall low plan quality scores for both direction setting and action-oriented principles show that the plans will not create local resiliency during post-disaster recovery. Research has shown that well-designed commands create higher rates of adoption and higher quality plans, but local jurisdictions are capable of making choices on their own that motivate change through better plans.

“...Critical gaps in knowledge about the influences of planning on urban rebuilding and ultimately on community disaster resiliency must be addressed. Research is needed to test the efficacy of recovery plans on post-disaster social, economic, natural, and built environment outcomes...”