

# American Planning Association

Planning for Post-Disaster Recovery  
Session 2

Moderator: James Schwab, AICP, APA

Speakers:

Laurie A. Johnson, AICP, Laurie Johnson Consulting

Lincoln Walther, FAICP, CSA Ocean Sciences, Inc.

Lori Feild Schwarz, City of Plano, TX

# Welcome Points

- Part of Resilient Communities Track
- **Purpose**: Planning for long-term recovery from disasters is critical to community resilience, and the role of planners in shaping the lens of recovery is equally important. This session will introduce the key concepts and lessons documented in a new Planning Advisory Service (PAS) report, titled Planning for Post-Disaster Recovery: Next Generation, to be published later this year.

# What makes these sessions different?

- Live Streaming via webcast to the Governor's South Atlantic Alliance, a network of four states (FL, GA, SC, NC) cooperating on coastal issues
  - Moderator will be taking questions from audience as well as online
- This is Part 1 of 2 sessions devoted to this topic. Not enough time in one session to devote to this topic area; strongly encourage participants to attend both sessions.

# About This Second Session

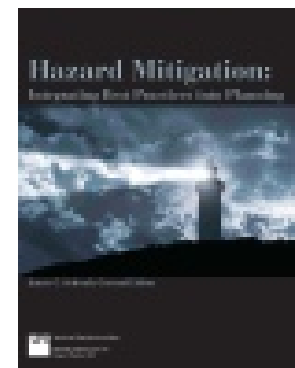
- Part 2 will focus on the planning process, including how goals and policies tie the long-term recovery plan to other community planning processes.

## *Objectives:*

- *Describe the differences between pre- and post-disaster planning processes for long-term recovery*
- *Understand how long-term recovery planning goals and policies can be linked to other local planning processes to make them relevant and implementable*

# Background on FEMA/APA Partnership on Disaster Recovery

- Originated with 1993 agreement to produce PAS Report No. 483/484—*Planning for Post-Disaster Recovery and Reconstruction*—issued in 1998
- Subsequent efforts included:
  - Collaboration on training workshop, “Planning for a Disaster-Resistant Community” (2003)
  - PAS Report No. 560, *Hazard Mitigation: Integrating Best Practices into Planning* (2010)
  - Input on various other FEMA initiatives



# Planning for Post-Disaster Recovery: Next Generation

- Launched in October 2010
- Aim to incorporate numerous new lessons since 1998
- Will result in forthcoming PAS Report to replace *Planning for Post-Disaster Recovery and Reconstruction*
- Includes robust web components to provide publicly accessible information prior to PAS Report
  - Web effort includes *Recovery News* blog at <http://blogs.planning.org/postdisaster/>



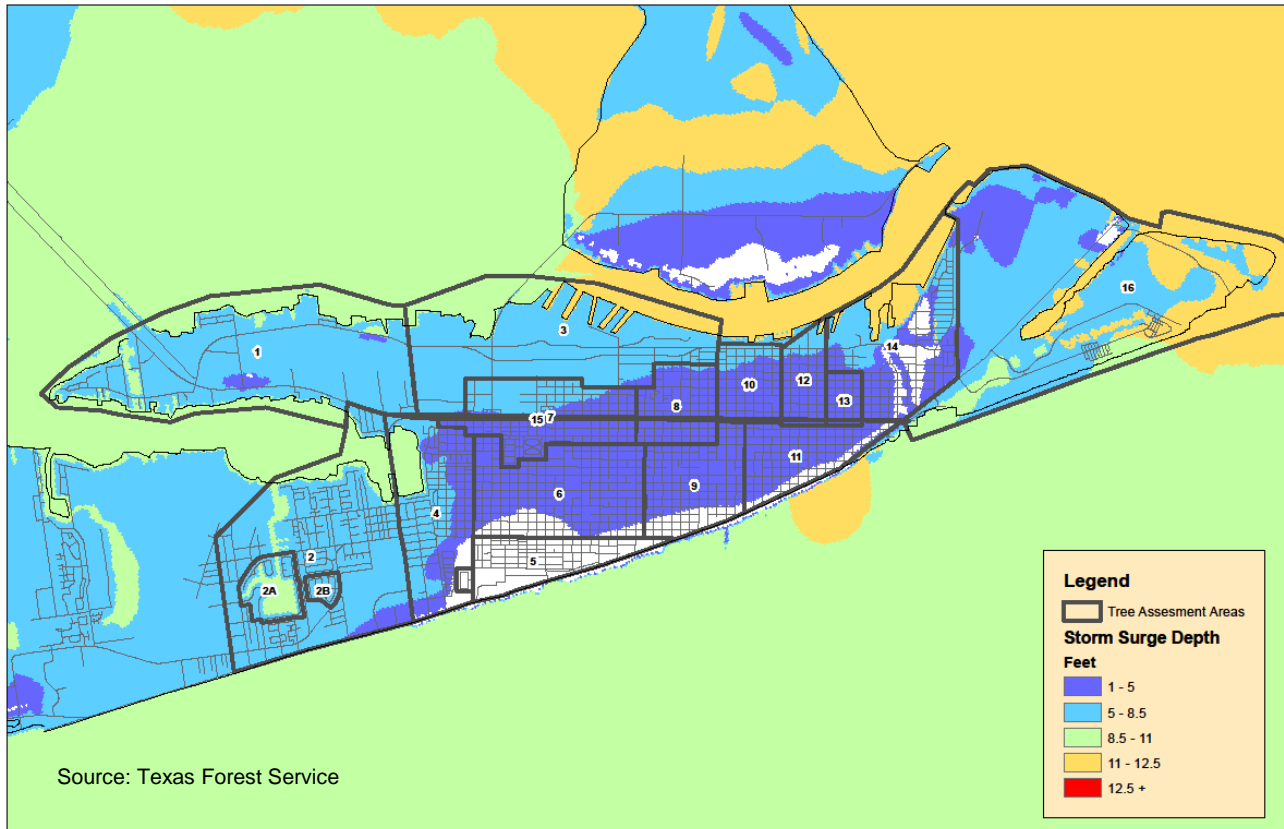
# Galveston, TX Experience



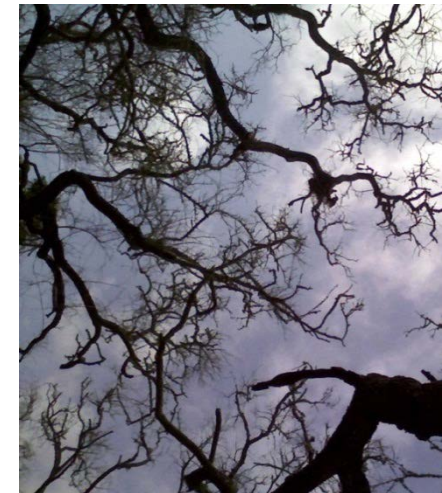
September 12-13, 2008

- Category 2 winds per the **Safir-Simpson scale**, with **Category 4** storm surge
- 75% of all buildings in Galveston were damaged
- Over 25,000 building permits issued
- 75% of tree canopy lost
- Still in recovery and rebuilding

# Galveston, TX Experience



Source: Texas Forest Service





## Question #1:

- Laurie Johnson, how is the recovery planning process different from normal city planning?

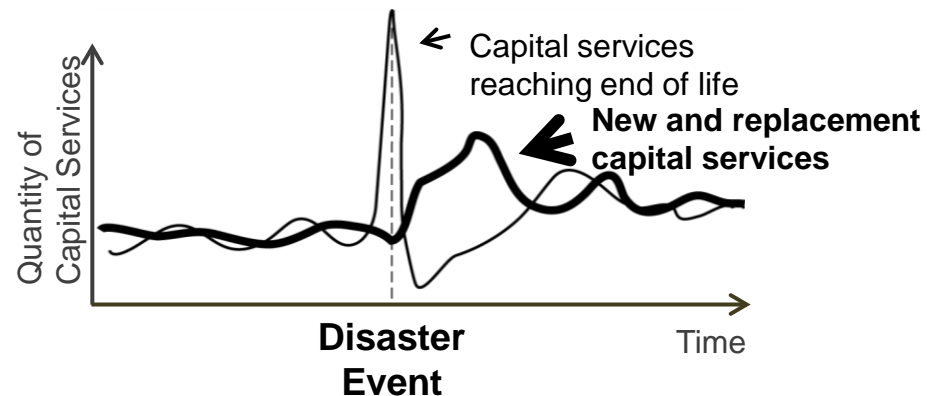
# Laurie Johnson



## Key Steps in the Recovery Planning Process

- Initiate the Process
- Organize Public Participation
- Conduct Research and Analysis
- Facilitate Input
- Develop and Adopt the Plan
- Implement the Plan

## Post-disaster Activities Compress Both in Time and Space



(Source: Olshansky, Hopkins, & Johnson, *Natural Hazards Review*, August 2012)



## Laurie Johnson

- Actual work flow may not be as linear as other planning efforts, especially after a disaster. Tasks can and may need to be performed simultaneously, requiring a lot more resources, communications, and coordination.
- Plans are more focused on recovery-related topics, policies, programs, and projects.
- Uncertainties will need to be managed carefully in developing scenarios, alternative strategies, and policies.
- A clear and inspiring planning vision can significantly motivate the many stakeholders and investors in the planning process and its implementation.

# Lori Schwarz



- Long Term Community Recovery process began 10 weeks after Hurricane Ike, assisted by FEMA
- Over 330 people appointed to the Recovery Committee by City Council
- 13 work groups and 42 project teams
- Weekly steering committee meetings from February 2 through March 23, 2009: 3 hours each Monday night
- 4200+ volunteer hours to create the Recovery Plan



Source: Galveston Long Term Community Recovery Plan

Members of the Galveston Recovery Committee

## Five Recovery Focus Areas:

- The Environment
- Economic Development
- Housing and Community Character
- Health and Education
- Transportation and Infrastructure and Mitigation



# Galveston's Vision for Recovery

- a place with unique characteristics and history. Our vision is to recover Galveston to a less vulnerable, more resilient place; economically, socially, physically and environmentally.
- 1) clean, smart, sustainable promoting green living practices; 2) has scientifically based policies for environmentally sustainable development and infrastructure that is in harmony with nature; 3) dedicated to preservation and conservation of sustainable natural resources; 4) a welcoming, scenic and natural place with planned beautification standards.
- "As both home and destination, Galveston represents cultural vitality and quality of life. Clean, safe neighborhoods have a broad socio-economic spectrum of responsible citizens and affordable housing. A solid economic, educational, recreational and medical infrastructure supports households and visitors in an atmosphere of natural beauty, historic preservation and artistic significance."
- a community where education is the economic engine that leverages every other community investment such as health care, environment, transportation, and development.
- a community where quality health care in its fullest sense is an essential need and available to every member of our community. Our vision is to develop such a system in Galveston.
- a diverse island paradise where history and the future meet as a model for resilient sustainable coastal living.

## Question #2:

- The new PAS Report will distinguish between recovery plans developed before disaster strikes and those developed afterwards. Can you tell us what can be addressed appropriately ahead of a disaster, and what must await a proper assessment of the damages and impacts of the disaster?



# Lincoln Walther



*"A risk-based framework for land-use planning offers public agencies a rational means for managing inevitable change."*

L Johnson et al.

# Pre-Disaster Benefits

1. Blue Skies planning versus compressed planning
2. More time for thoughtful consideration of complex issues versus “Ready, Fire, Aim”.
3. Designing organizational structure
4. An opportunity for a more comprehensive consideration of appropriate issues and time to develop initiatives, strategies, projects.



# Planning Differences in a Post-Disaster Planning Environment

1. Time Compression
2. Speed versus deliberation
3. Modifying and tailoring the recovery specifics
4. The type of disaster
5. Scale and scope of the disaster
6. Assessment of physical damage to structures and infrastructure
7. Psychological/emotional affects to the populace
8. Demographic and Special Needs populations (e.g., infirmed, aged, young children)



# Lori Schwarz

## Progress Galveston

- Comprehensive Plan Update
  - Vision Statement
  - New: Infrastructure, Disaster Planning, Transportation and Human Elements
- Coordinated Land Development Regulations
  - Development Standards for Infrastructure
  - Subdivision Regulations, including wetland and land conservation protection
  - Future Land Use Map
- Specialized Plans



Follow the project at  
[www.ProgressGalveston.com](http://www.ProgressGalveston.com)

The screenshot shows the Progress Galveston website interface. At the top right is a 'USER AREA' with links for 'home', 'info', 'participate', 'library', and 'comment'. Below this are four main project cards: 'project overview', 'comp plan', 'specialized plans', and 'development regulations'. Each card has a brief description and a circular icon with a question mark. Below the cards is a 'Project Timeline' section with a horizontal bar chart showing the duration of various activities from February to June.

Activity	Start	End
Council Workshop on LDRs	Feb	Mar
Council Workshop on Comp Plan	Mar	Apr
Specialized Plans	Apr	May
Land Development Regulations	May	Jun
Progress Galveston Public Workshop	Jun	Jun

# Specialized Plans

## FIRST PHASE



Parks &  
Recreation



Historic  
Preservation

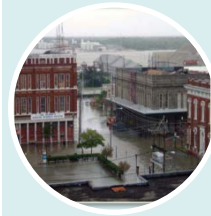


Coastal  
Management  
& Erosion  
Response

## SECOND PHASE



Mobility &  
Thoroughfare



Disaster  
Recovery



Community  
Sustainability

- Implement the Comprehensive Plan
- Comply with State & Federal Requirements
- Access Funding & Assistance Programs

## Question #3:

- Lincoln Walther, what is the imperative behind preparing such a plan? What have Florida communities and others learned about the value of these plans?

# Lincoln Walther



**Hurricane Andrew**



# What Florida has learned

- Disasters are “Big Ticket Items”
- Disasters will happen again and again
- Projection of increase in disaster intensity
- Rebuilding a community after a major or catastrophic disaster is a huge undertaking
- Most effective and efficient way to accomplish holistic post-disaster redevelopment is to have a long-term recovery plan
- Developing a long-term recovery plan requires envisioning the potential obstacles to reconstructing a community in a compressed timeline and thinking critically and thoughtfully
- It requires the involvement of stakeholders – “The Whole Community”
- Successful recovery plans requires buy-in of elected officials
- Without implementing a long-term recovery plan, the plan is nothing more than ink on paper.



# A thought to remember

**“If you don’t invest in the future, you repeat  
the past”**

Robert E. Hughley – Margate, NJ

# Lori Schwarz



- **Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005**
  - Learn from other communities' failures/successes as well as your own communities past experiences to prepare an action plan
- **Disaster Response Plan for Historic Properties**
  - "Picture This!" volunteer effort to address historic resources
- **Hazard Mitigation Planning**
  - Part of a county plan that was not specific to the coastal and historic environment of Galveston



## DISASTER RESPONSE FOR HISTORIC PROPERTIES



City of Galveston Disaster Response for Historic Properties Plan  
 2007



### DISASTER PREPARATION FOR HISTORIC PROPERTIES

*Prepare-Protect-Preserve*

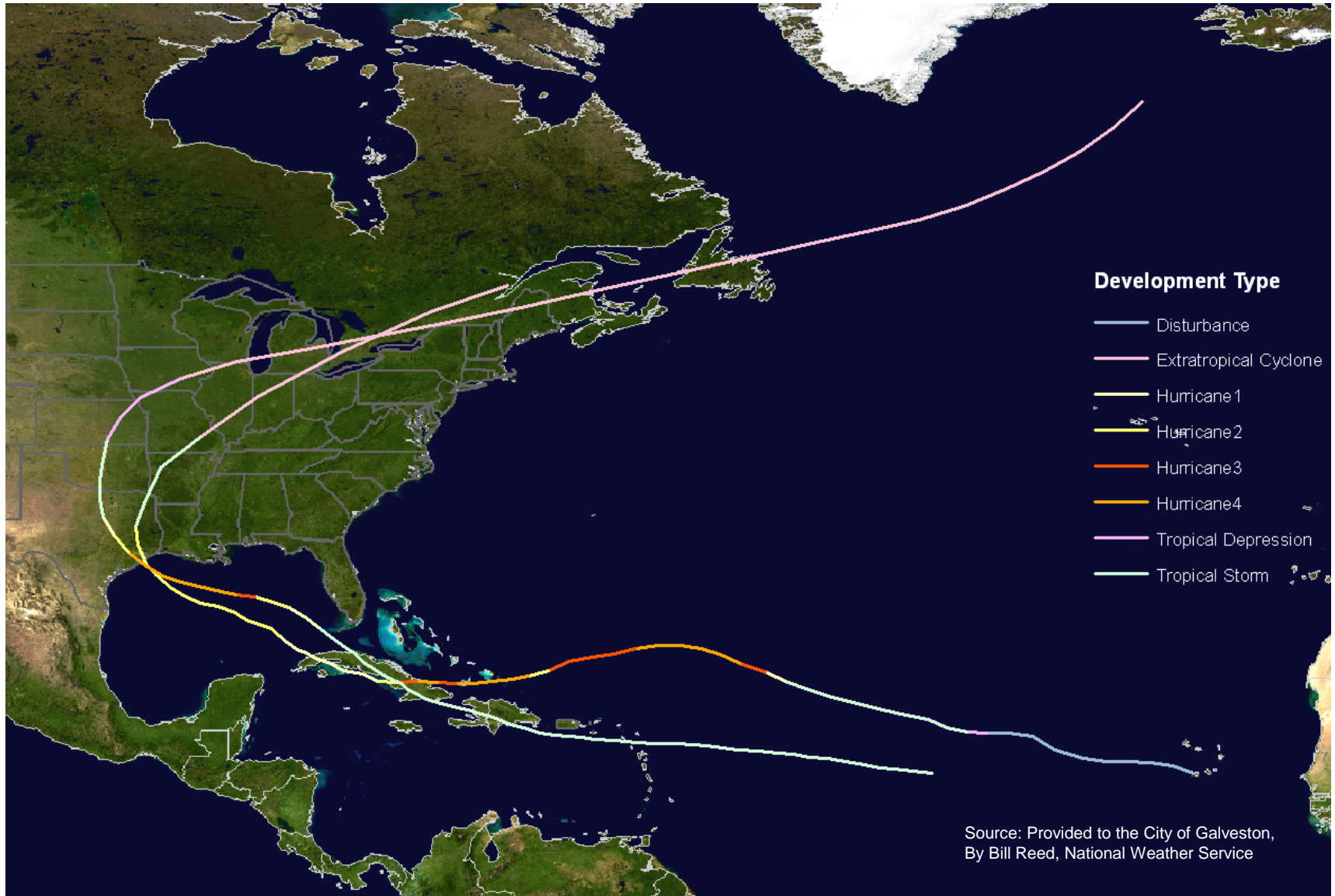


CITY OF GALVESTON  
 DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING  
 AND COMMUNITY

2007

Source: Historic Photographs Courtesy of Rosenberg Library, Galveston Texas







# Laurie Johnson

## Proven Value of Recovery Plans and Planning

- Improve the quality and efficiency of a community's recovery over that of an ad-hoc approach
- Help reduce uncertainty through the collection and analysis of disaster-related conditions and needs
- Help make the case for money, show that money will be spent wisely, and justify funds already allocated
- Serve as an important demonstration of leadership to inform and influence stakeholders
- Help provide the means for public discussion of the future (adapting to the "new normal") and to generate new ideas, elaborate and refine proposals, and assess alternative strategies

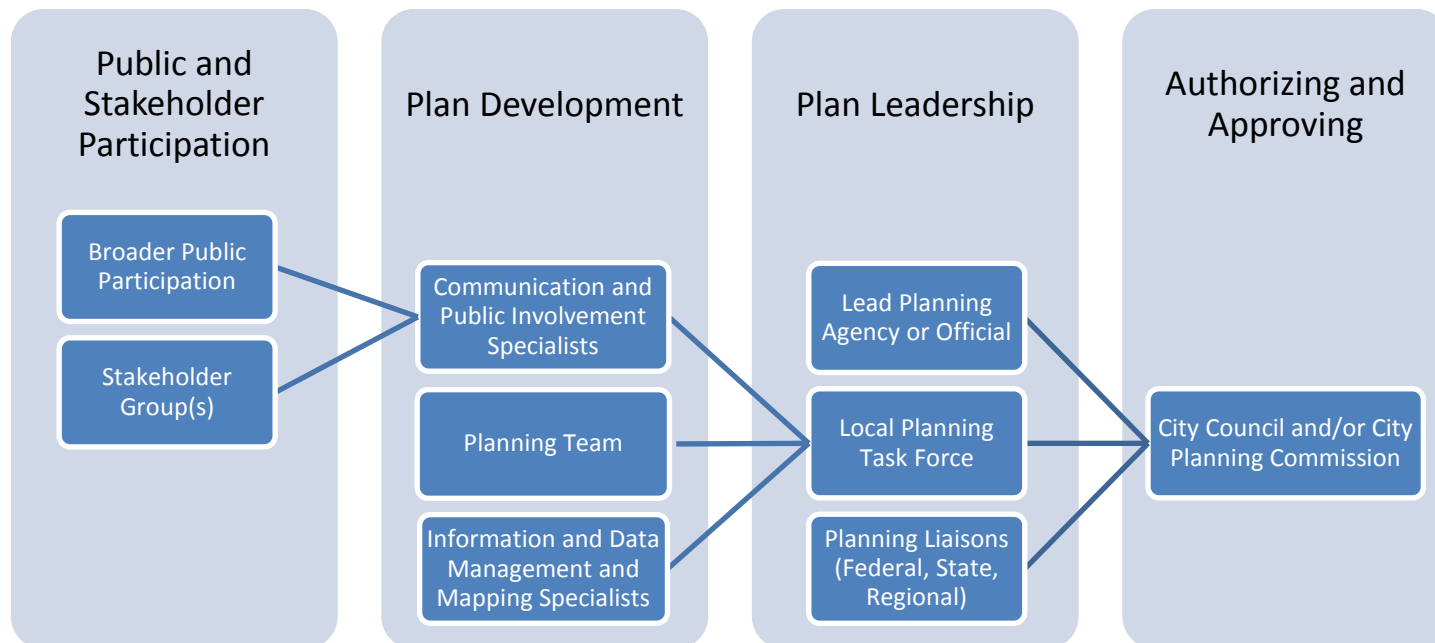
## Question #4:

- Laurie Johnson, what is involved in planning for disaster recovery and reconstruction? What does it take to plan successfully?



# Laurie Johnson

- Leadership and collaborative partnerships are two core principles of the National Disaster Recovery Framework and can be key determinants to a successful recovery planning effort.



# Laurie Johnson

- Public input into the planning process
  - Should be seen as central “pivot points” that move the planning process forward
- Research and analysis
  - Should focus on identifying priority issues to be addressed with a comprehensive baseline view of the community and how it will likely change or has changed as a result of a disaster.
- Implementation is critical to recovery, so the plan needs a strong implementation section to define the recovery management organization, implementation timeline and strategies, financing plan, etc.



# Questions?

- If you are part of the live audience, please get in line for the microphone on the floor.
- If you are part of the GSAA virtual audience, submit your question electronically, and the moderator will read it from a screen at the podium.
- The moderator will alternate between both sources of questions as long as both are active.

# For more information

Contact:

APA Hazards Planning Research Center

[hazards@planning.org](mailto:hazards@planning.org)

<http://www.planning.org/nationalcenters/hazards/>

THANK YOU!