

Preparing to Preserve

Emergency Planning: Model Checklist for Historic Preservation

Historic preservation can be a powerful catalyst for recovery and revitalization in the wake of natural and man-made disasters. It restores the fabric of a community, especially the familiar landmarks of one's neighborhood – churches, schools, stores, front porches, parks – which provide a tremendous source of comfort and hope for survivors. It also supports the quick return of life, commerce, and a sense of normalcy to the community.

This list of elements should be part of your community's approach to emergency management planning. Advocate for their inclusion to ensure that the built environment is not further degraded through inadvertent response actions, demolition, or neglect.

DEFINITIONS

Emergency Manager: Government official responsible for developing and implementing an emergency response plan.

Emergency Operations Center: A central location staffed by representatives of various agencies including fire, rescue, public works and others that, in the event of an emergency, work together to coordinate the government response.

Hazard Mitigation: Action taken to reduce or eliminate risks to human life or property from natural and human-caused disasters.

Response: Immediate actions taken to save lives, public property and the environment, and meet basic human needs.

Recovery: Once conditions have stabilized, the actions taken to provide long-term aid to affected persons, clear debris, begin repair and rebuilding.

Damage Assessment Teams: Groups of individuals who go into the field to survey conditions to determine the scope and nature of the impact on the natural and built environment.

- ✓ The preservation community is in regular contact with the **Emergency Operations Manager** and a preservation representative is assigned to the **Emergency Operations Center**.
- ✓ Preservationists are recruited and trained to participate in **risk assessment, mitigation, response** and **recovery**, and to serve on **damage assessment teams**.
- ✓ Local officials have been given a comprehensive survey of their community's historic resources.
- ✓ Building condition assessment forms consider the historic integrity of buildings districts.
- ✓ Historic District Commissions and other regulatory review bodies have developed post-disaster procedures for design review and permitting in historic districts.
- ✓ Sites selected for response personnel staging areas, temporary housing, and debris removal and storage do not impact historic or archeological sites.
- ✓ Salvage protocols for the debris removal process address the need to preserve historic features and materials.
- ✓ Demolition permit criteria and procedures include evaluation by historic preservation experts.
- ✓ A preservation professional is trained and available to participate in deliberations regarding post-disaster recovery activities and priorities.