Disaster Housing Preparedness Guide

For Local Jurisdictions

2025

Prepared for:

Housing Delaware

(Delaware State Housing Authority)

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How to Use This Guide

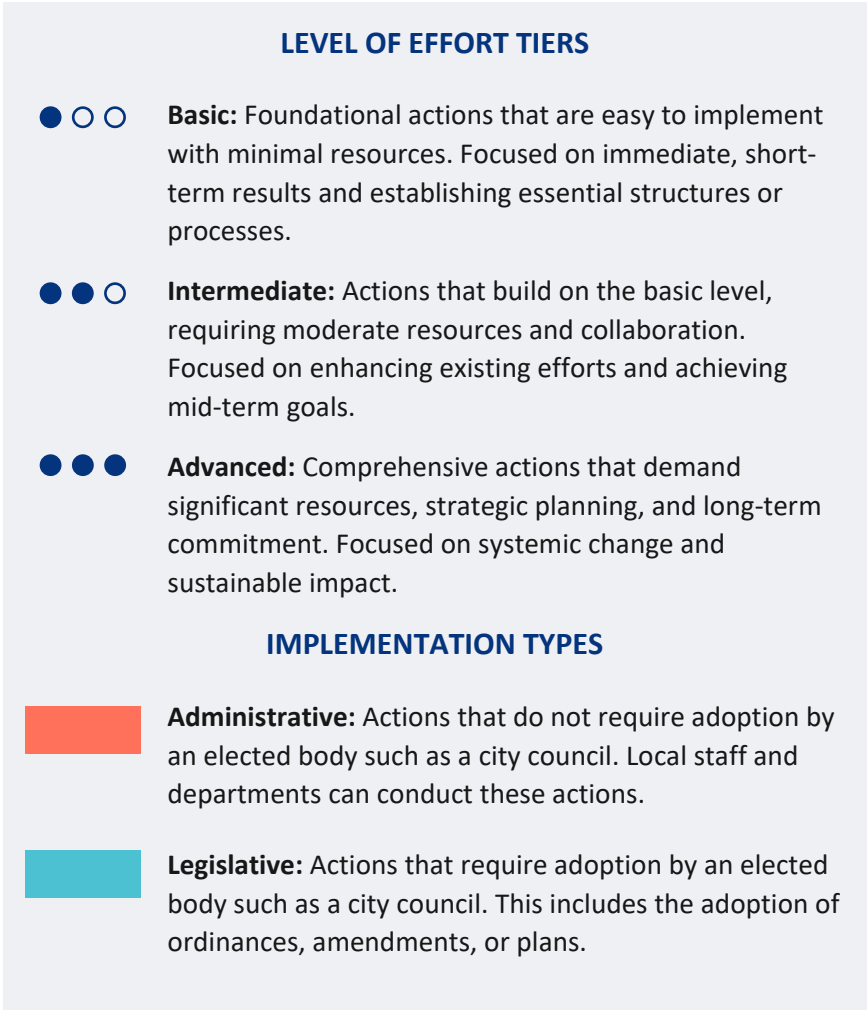
After a disaster, federal and state agencies, local governments, and community partners must coordinate to ensure a swift, efficient, and equitable response and recovery. However, local governments, because of their local knowledge and community connections, are best positioned to lead and manage disaster response and recovery. This is referred to as "local primacy" under the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF). Local primacy encourages local jurisdictions to lead and manage disaster recovery efforts while coordinating with partners.[1]

The ability of any municipality to get displaced residents back into safe, permanent housing and repair and rebuild its damaged or destroyed housing stock after a disaster is greatly impacted by the actions it takes during the preparedness phase, which occurs before a disaster and is also known as "blue skies".

This guide provides a menu of potential actions that local jurisdictions can take to prepare for and expedite housing recovery after a disaster. Actions are organized into six broad themes, including:

- Local Capacity Building and Training
- Housing Recovery Planning and Policy Development
- Land Use and Development
- Post-Disaster Permitting
- Housing Assistance and Mitigation Programs
- Community Engagement

Figure 1: Classification Icons for Local Actions



[1] FEMA. (2011). National Disaster Recovery Framework. Available at: https://www.fema.gov/pdf/recoveryframework/ndrf.pdf.

Each of these sections include a subsection on potential resources and partners for implementation. Each action has been assigned a level of effort to help municipalities identify foundational actions that require limited resources, or advanced actions that are focused on systemic change, which may require additional steps before implementation. Actions are categorized as either administrative or legislative. Administrative actions can be implemented by local staff and departments without formal adoption by an elected body. Legislative actions require adoption by an elected body such as a city council.

Municipalities should use this guide as a reference when determining appropriate preparedness needs for their community. Not every action included in this guide will be applicable to every municipality. Municipalities will need to determine which actions and pathways are most important to implement based on an assessment of their community's priorities and needs.

In addition, this guide provides callout boxes throughout with additional resources and references. Be on the lookout for the following tips and tools throughout the document:

CASE STUDY

Case studies or examples from other places

RESOURCE

Plans, research, guides, templates, or other reports

DATA/TOOL

Public datasets, mapping tools, or other data-centered resources for decision-making

Background

Throughout 2024, the Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA) convened the Delaware Disaster Housing Task Force (DHTF), comprised of local, state, federal, and community partners, to catalogue existing capabilities and resources to support housing recovery after a disaster. The State's Disaster Housing Strategy is a result of that engagement, outlining roles, responsibilities, and resources for post-disaster housing recovery.

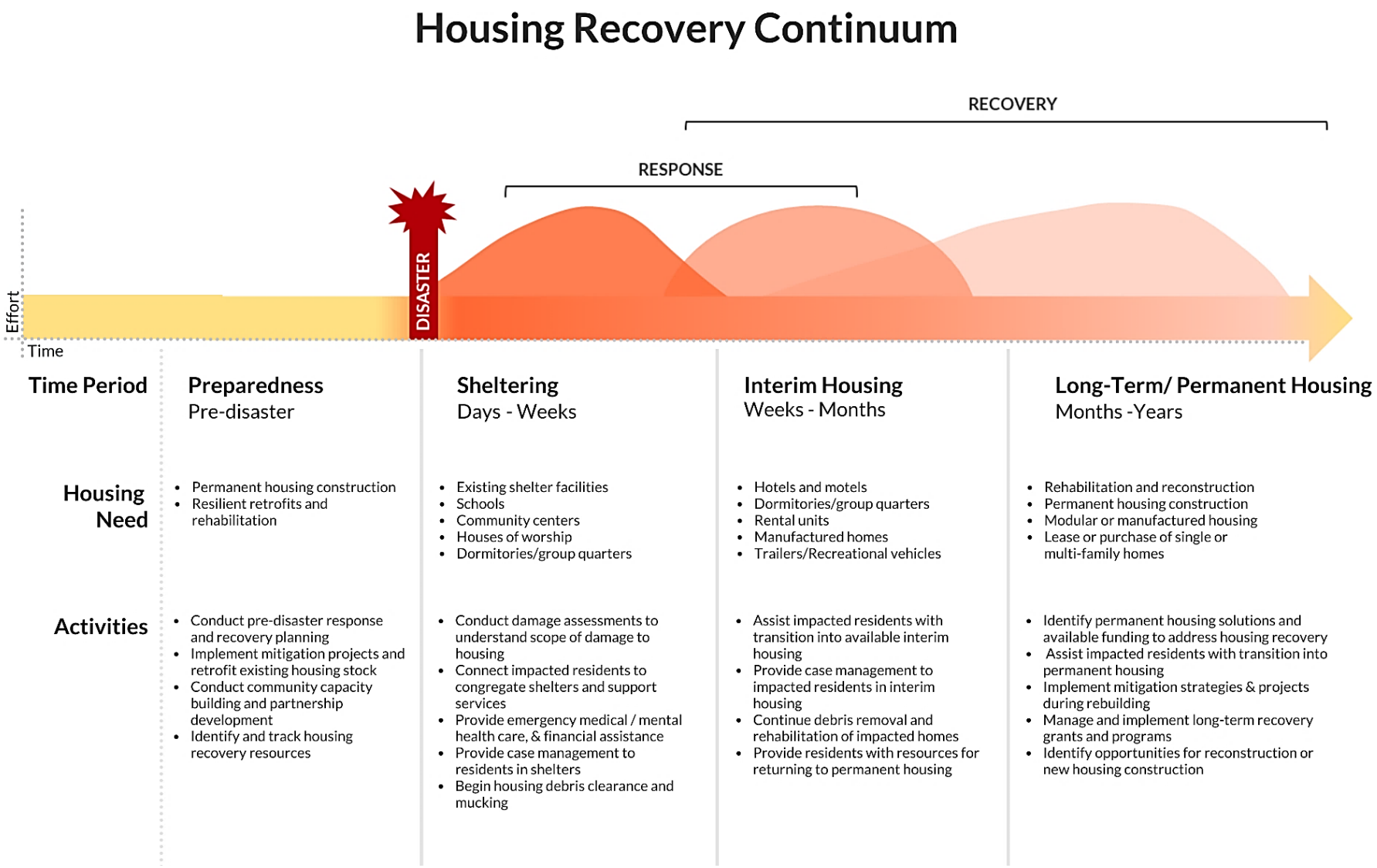
The Disaster Housing Strategy identifies a need to provide technical assistance to local jurisdictions to support preparations that enable better post-disaster housing recovery. This work is a result of engagement with local jurisdictions to understand what disaster housing preparedness actions they already have in place, what potential gaps exist among local municipalities, and what resources or support from which they might benefit. Each section of this guide includes a description of a potential local action to address disaster housing preparedness, resources for implementation, and partners involved in the development of the Disaster Housing Strategy that can offer support.

DISASTER RECOVERY CONTINUUM

As shown in Figure 2, **preparedness** includes any pre-disaster activities that enable governments and communities to respond efficiently and effectively to a disaster event. Activities may include pre-disaster response and recovery planning activities, mitigation planning and implementation, community capacity building, and partnership development. In the context of housing, preparedness may also include education or training for homeowners on floodproofing their home or the implementation of a housing retrofit program to make homes more resilient to future disasters.

Each phase of the housing recovery continuum supports and depends upon the others. Long-term disaster recovery ramps up as emergency response and short-term recovery wind down, but these phases often overlap. Long-term recovery then transitions back into preparedness and mitigation efforts as plans and strategies are updated to improve response and recovery from future disasters. Ideally, local governments should implement preparedness actions before a disaster, but some resilience or mitigation actions may also occur at various points throughout the continuum.

Figure 2: Housing Recovery Continuum



LOCAL AUTHORITY AND COORDINATION

Local jurisdictions have the authority to carry out disaster recovery operations through a combination of state laws, local ordinances, and emergency management or disaster housing plans. This authority enables them to coordinate resources, mobilize personnel, and implement recovery programs to restore critical infrastructure, public services, and economic stability. Local governments may issue emergency declarations, activate mutual aid agreements, and access state and federal assistance to support recovery efforts. Additionally, local governments play a key role in enforcing building codes, land-use regulations, and public health measures to ensure a safe and resilient recovery.

Depending on the size and authority of your municipality, you may rely on County authority or processes after a disaster. Counties may have broader authority, providing regional coordination and oversight of disaster recovery operations that serve multiple municipalities. Clear lines of authority, interagency coordination, and community engagement are essential for effective disaster recovery operations at the local and County level.

REGULATORY SUPPORT FOR DISASTER HOUSING RECOVERY

Title 31, Chapter 40 of the Delaware Code of Ordinances gives DSHA the authority to carry out housing activities, including the ability to investigate housing conditions, lease or rent housing accommodations, and carry out and operate housing construction, reconstruction, and improvement projects. These projects are all subject to zoning and building regulations applicable to the locality in which the project is situated. Title 20, Chapter 31 of the Delaware Code of Ordinances provides a reference point for authority and applicability during all phases of a disaster. Chapter 31 Emergency Management provides the Governor with the power to declare a state of emergency. Many Delaware town and city charters, such as those found in Harrington, Odessa, South Bethany, and Wyoming, list a declaration of emergency as a precursor for granting emergency powers to the locality's mayor. This language, which is consistent across town and city charters, reads as follows:

> "The Mayor may act on behalf of the Town, without prior Council approval, if a sudden emergency occurs requiring prompt action to protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the Town and its residents and property owners...An emergency situation declared by a county, state, or federal agency having jurisdiction over the Town and the scope of the emergency includes the Town."

Title 20, Chapter 31 affirms that the Governor's state of emergency proclamation "shall indicate the nature of the emergency or disaster, the area or areas threatened, and the conditions which have brought it about and may limit the order to a geographic area or specific resources." There may be situations in which the Mayor of an affected locality may not be granted emergency powers if the emergency order issued by the Governor does not explicitly name the affected locality. Title 20, Chapter 31 of the Delaware Code of Ordinances provides a comprehensive list of emergency situations that may require an emergency declaration, broadening the scope of applicability for emergency powers bestowed on a Mayor.

Title 31, Chapter 41 of the Delaware State Housing Code provides minimum maintenance and safety standards for residential buildings and structures. It states that every residential building or structure shall comply with the listed prescribed conditions and standards "when a deviation from such conditions and standards poses an imminent threat to the health, safety and general welfare of the occupants and other persons." Town Charters provide the cities and towns of Delaware with the ability to define, prevent, abate, or remove nuisances to public safety, health, or welfare. Local governments have the power to adopt ordinances condemning buildings or structures, and regulate and control the construction, alteration, or removal of dwellings or other structures.

Title 29, Chapter 79, Subchapter 4 of the Delaware Code of Ordinances, establishes the Emergency Housing Fund Administration Board, which regulates, allocates, and administers all funds collected in said fund. Eligibility for this fund is limited to private, nonprofit agencies within the state that provide short-term and supportive housing services to those experiencing homelessness. The funds provide temporary housing intervention for a period of 90 days or less, and the facility must meet all local building codes. Thus, local governments may not be recipients of the fund but will serve a crucial role in identifying structures to serve as emergency housing shelters through the authority to regulate local zoning and building permits.

In addition to defining emergency situations and state roles and responsibilities, the Delaware Code also provides language that may support local and county jurisdictions in the implementation of certain disaster housing recovery activities. Below are examples of language in the Delaware Code that support the implementation of disaster housing preparedness and recovery activities.

Support for the lease of public land utilized for disaster response activities or temporary housing

"The county governments of this state may execute and deliver, in proper form, a lease, concession agreement, easement, or license agreement for any part of the public lands owned by them, including park land and land held in a public trust." (81 Del. Laws, c. 361, § 2)

Support for the continuity of nonconforming buildings or the issuance of temporary use permits to support post-disaster housing needs and related activities

Title 22, Chapter 3 of the Municipal Zoning Regulations allows the legislative body of a municipality the ability to establish and enforce, and occasionally amend, supplement, or change the regulations, restrictions, and boundaries of its districts. (39 Del. Laws, c. 22, § 5)

Support for the issuance of emergency permits and permit fee waivers

"The Levy Court of Kent County and the County Councils of New Castle County and Sussex County may adopt and enforce building codes, plumbing codes, electrical codes, or other similar codes. The said Levy Court and County Councils may charge reasonable fees for the enforcement of said codes." (16 Del. Laws, c. 076)

Identify potential site(s) for interim housing

Title 29, Chapter 79, Subchapter 5 defines a congregate housing facility as "a facility housing 8 or more homeless adults and children on a temporary basis." This definition could apply to interim housing facilities, and the standards outlined in this chapter are a good framework for the development of such facilities. (16 Del. Laws, c. 079)

Local Capacity Building and Training

IN THIS SECTION

By equipping local staff and officials with the necessary knowledge, skills, and resources, municipalities can develop and implement resilient housing strategies that mitigate risks before disasters occur. **Strengthening local capacity** fosters better coordination with state and federal agencies, ensuring that recovery efforts are streamlined and equitable. Investing in training and workforce development empowers municipalities to build long-term resilience and protect vulnerable populations from future disasters.

- ●○○ Establish a mutual aid agreement for code enforcement and building departments
- ●●○ Conduct an assessment of local staff and partner capacity to assist and manage the return of disaster-displaced residents into interim or permanent housing
- ●●○ Conduct training for local staff on disaster housing recovery
- ●●● Conduct an assessment of existing local and state codes to understand current regulations that enable efficient housing recovery and identify gaps
- ●●● Participate in the Community Rating System (CRS)

Resources: Templates, tools, and other resources to guide action development and implementation

Partners: Federal, state, local, and community partners involved in the development of the Disaster Housing Strategy that can provide support or guidance

CODE ENFORCEMENT

Establish a mutual aid agreement for code enforcement and building departments

Following a disaster, communities often face a surge in building inspections, permits, and code enforcement to ensure safe rebuilding and recovery. Jurisdictions may not be equipped to handle the increased demand due to insufficient personnel, so the need for supplemental code administration and enforcement staff becomes crucial to manage the increased workload and maintain safety standards during the recovery process. Mutual aid agreements address this challenge by allowing jurisdictions to share public- and private-sector personnel during emergencies. These agreements, established both within states and across state lines, ensure that building departments can augment their staff when needed, facilitating timely response and recovery efforts. Personnel in mutual aid agreements are typically categorized into two groups: public-sector personnel (including local, state, and federal officials) and private-sector personnel (such as engineers, architects, and technicians).

RESOURCE

FEMA's Mutual Aid for Building Departments: Region 3 provides specific guidance to Region 3 states regarding the Disaster Recovery and Reform Act of 2018 and applicable Intrastate and Interstate Mutual Aid programs.

To request mutual aid, local building departments must follow established agreements or systems that outline the terms and conditions for requesting and receiving support. The Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) is a key example of such a system, providing a framework for interstate cooperation. Delaware's Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), established under Title 20 Chapter 34 of the Delaware Code of Ordinances, facilitates mutual assistance between states during emergencies or disasters declared by the governor. The compact allows for the sharing of resources, including personnel and equipment, and ensures that professionals licensed in one state are recognized in others to assist with disaster response efforts, including training and exercises outside actual emergency periods.

In addition to EMAC, many states also have Intrastate Mutual Aid Systems (IMAS) that allow local jurisdictions within the same state to share resources during emergencies. IMAS exists in many different forms throughout the country, and not every area has one. Delaware has a statewide opt-out program, meaning that the state has created a mutual aid program that automatically integrates all political subdivisions into it. The burden to opt-out of the IMAS falls on individual jurisdictions. Some states also recognize the need for private-sector inclusion in mutual aid agreements, allowing private entities to provide specialized support, such as engineering services, in response to a disaster. These systems, which often come with liability protections for private-sector personnel, ensure that building departments can access a broad range of expertise, speeding up the recovery process and ensuring safety and compliance with building codes.

STAFF CAPACITY ASSESSMENT

Conduct an assessment of local staff and partner capacity to assist and manage the return of disaster-displaced residents into interim or permanent housing

The ability of a government to develop and implement post-disaster strategies and activities is directly tied to its ability to direct staff time and resources for that purpose. A staff capacity assessment identifies gaps related to risk reduction, understand desired capacities, and propose recommendations for achieving those capacities. The results will help develop strong partnerships and identify key roles necessary for working with displaced residents. Successful implementation of disaster housing protocols requires assessing staff capacity and establishing partnerships with other agencies to identify both gaps and the staffing positions or partners needed to fulfill key functions. Additionally, the capacity assessment will examine what the potential supplemental staffing needs will be post-disaster based on increased need. Numerous organizational capacity assessment tools can guide this process.

DATA/TOOL

HUD's CDBG-DR Toolkit Organizational Model & Potential Partners Summary can be utilized to help determine disaster housing responsibilities and staffing capacity gaps.

A comprehensive capacity assessment is best achieved through broad engagement from all staff. Relevant expertise and needs often exist across jurisdictions and organizational levels and functions. The assessment tool should be implemented prior to a crisis to assess the community's existing capacity to respond or rebuild better.

Some broad categories to be considered for evaluating organizational capacity include:

- **Governance/Leadership:** evaluating goals, strategy, structure, and intergovernmental coordination;
- **Organizational Management:** reviewing strategic planning, emergency preparedness activities, and highlighting best practices;
- **Human Resource Management:** cataloging staff skills and experience, technical capacity, and recruitment and retention strategies to meet staffing need in both normal and emergency situations;
- **Program/Project Management:** review policies and procedures relating to needs assessments, feasibility and risk analysis, program design and implementation, and monitoring and evaluation; and
- **External Relations:** consider the relationships and resources to coordinate with local organizations and service providers, as well as communication strategies with stakeholders.

STAFF TRAINING

Conduct training for local staff on disaster housing recovery

State and local stakeholders must recognize the importance of preparing for disasters and emergencies, which can occur at any time. During a disaster, survivors often face challenges in knowing where to turn for help and navigating barriers to accessing disaster assistance programs. Therefore, it is crucial for local officials and staff to possess the necessary skills and knowledge to guide their communities through the recovery process and ensure they receive the assistance they need. Local staff should be familiar with the types of disasters most likely to impact their communities and tailor their emergency preparedness and recovery materials accordingly.

To effectively contribute to disaster housing recovery efforts, local officials should pursue training from organizations such as HUD, FEMA, and the National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC). This training should focus on housing counseling, disaster preparedness, and recovery support. HUD's Housing Counseling Disaster Field Guide, available on HUD Exchange, is primarily focused on federally declared disasters but also offers valuable information for state and local disaster responses. This guide can be supplemented with specific local guidance to ensure a comprehensive and effective response.

Training prepares local staff for disaster response and deployment and to familiarize those involved in disaster housing recovery with the relevant plans. Training provides staff with insights into the disaster response landscape, helping them understand how they may be called upon to respond post-disaster. Additionally, training prepares staff for the realities of post-disaster work, including checklists, worksheets, and practical considerations. Since each disaster is unique, response and deployment will require context-specific adjustments.

RESOURCE

HUD's Housing Counseling Disaster Recovery Toolkit is a resource for those who will play an active role in local disaster preparedness, response and recovery. The toolkit provides guidance for both preparing for a disaster and operating post-disaster. While geared towards housing counselors, it provides concrete guidance and key actions to prepare operations, staff, and clients.

LOCAL AND STATE CODE ASSESSMENT

Conduct an assessment of existing local and state codes to understand current regulations that enable efficient housing recovery and identify gaps

Assessing local and state regulations through a Capability Assessment (CA) is essential for ensuring effective and efficient government interventions. Taking an inventory of a jurisdiction's relevant plans, ordinances, or programs is a key component of a CA. This process provides a structured approach for evaluating the potential impacts of current regulations after a disaster, helping jurisdictions identify regulatory gaps and other potential obstacles.

Assessing existing local and state land use, zoning, and building codes will lead to more efficiency post-disaster, as there will be both a desire and need to quickly house those who were affected. The assessment provides a general overview of key planning and regulatory tools that are either currently in place or under development and examines their potential effect on recovery and redevelopment. In the context of housing recovery, the assessment should focus on state and local land use, planning, zoning, and building codes. The assessment should consider the specific housing policy need, the objective of the regulation, and limitations of the regulation.

This information will help identify opportunities to address existing gaps, weaknesses, or conflicts with other initiatives and plans. The outcome of this assessment will help to inform jurisdictions when creating other resources, such as pre-disaster ordinances, permits waivers, and expedited permits and licensing. Regular assessments of existing regulations help identify inefficiencies, reduce unnecessary burdens, and ensure that regulations continue to serve the public interest. By focusing on effectiveness and addressing emerging challenges, governments can maintain a regulatory framework that responds to societal needs and promotes long-term well-being.

CASE STUDY

The 2010 Alachua County, FL Post-Disaster Redevelopment Plan contains a five-part Capability Assessment. The purpose of this assessment is to take an inventory of a jurisdiction's relevant plans, ordinances, and programs is a key component of a capacity assessment (CA). This process helps evaluate the potential impacts of current regulations after a disaster, identifying regulatory gaps and other potential obstacles.

COMMUNITY RATING SYSTEM

Participate in the Community Rating System (CRS)

Flooding is one of the most destructive and costly natural hazards in the United States, yet standard homeowners and commercial property insurance policies do not cover flood losses. The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) offers reasonably priced flood insurance to properties in participating communities, which must meet the NFIP's minimum floodplain management standards. The NFIP's Community Rating System (CRS) is a voluntary program that incentivizes community-level floodplain management. It encourages communities to adopt stricter flood regulations and protective measures, rewarding those that exceed the minimum standards with insurance discounts. CRS credit points are awarded for various floodplain management activities, with the total points determining the discount amount.

Given the localized nature of flood hazards, local governments are often more effective at assessing and managing risk.[2] Communities play an increasingly important role in flood-risk-related decision making[3]. When communities join the CRS program, their previous mitigation activities are automatically recognized, allowing them to determine their CRS class and credit points. This enables communities to plan future mitigation actions and expand existing projects while considering fiscal and institutional constraints.

Additional benefits of CRS participation include enhanced safety and reduced damage through improved floodplain management; benchmarking to measure the effectiveness of flood programs against a national standard; free technical assistance for designing and implementing activities; an incentive to maintain programs, as CRS status motivates communities to sustain their efforts; and eligibility for federal assistance, helping communities qualify for aid programs. The CRS provides credit for certain state laws, regulations, and standards that support effective floodplain management, such as Delaware's Hazard Disclosure requirements under Activity 340.

RESOURCE

FEMA's CRS Quick Check is a simple tool that is a part of the Community Rating System Application Letter of Interest. It is designed to help a community assess its current floodplain management activities are adequate to join CRS. The Quick Check provides a list that includes the more common items that earn CRS credits.

[2] Flood risk, insurance, and community-level mitigation efforts: Evidence from the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating System. International Journal of Risk Reduction. Volume 118. 2025. Davlasheridze, Meri, and Qin Fan. Available online at: https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S2212420925000792.

[3] A review of community flood risk management studies in the United States. International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction. Volume 41. 2019. Sadiq, Abdul-Akeem, Jenna Tyler, and Douglas Noonan. Available online at: https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S2212420919309227.

RESOURCES

Resource	Resource Type	Description
Alachua County Post-Disaster Redevelopment Plan, Section 5.0 Capability Assessment	Case study	This 2010 Capability Assessment serves as a critical planning step for designing a post-disaster redevelopment strategy by establishing goals and objectives as well as tools for assessing local capacity to undertake redevelopment activities.
Borough of Yardley Residents to Save More on Flood Insurance Premiums	Case study	2022 press release providing an overview of actions Yardley took to attain an approximate 10% CRS discount.
CDBG-DR Toolkit Organizational Model & Potential Partners Summary	Data or tool	This tool helps to assess staff capacity to make decisions about how to build a team that has the skills and resources necessary to implement the operational functions such as program operations, data systems and reporting, human resources, compliance, and monitoring.
Del Code Title 20, Chapter 34: Emergency Management Assistance Compact	Research, report, or other guidance	Published language of Delaware's Emergency Management Assistance Compact.
Disaster Training and Education, National Center for Disaster Preparedness	Research, report, or other guidance	The National Center for Disaster Preparedness, Columbia Climate School at Columbia University, provides resources and training that focuses on the readiness of governmental and non-governmental systems.
Emergency Management Institute, FEMA	Research, report, or other guidance	The Emergency Management Institute provides foundational training and development for early career emergency managers.
FEMA Fact Sheet: Mutual Aid for Building Departments	Research, report, or other guidance	This fact sheet series is designed to inform local officials and community stakeholders of building department mutual aid support following a disaster
FEMA Fact Sheet: Mutual Aid for Building Departments: Region 3	Research, report, or other guidance	This fact sheet provides specific guidance to Region 3 states regarding the Disaster Recovery and Reform Act of 2018 and applicable Intrastate and Interstate Mutual Aid programs.
HO235el Navigating the Road to Housing Recovery: Training the Counselor	Research, report, or other guidance	This self-guided course is designed for housing professionals who work with disaster survivors to gain the much-needed knowledge and counseling skills to help their communities. This course is designed for housing professionals, program managers, rental housing counselors, financial coaches, community-based organizations, and stakeholders.

Resource	Resource Type	Description
Housing Counseling Disaster Field Guide	Research, report, or other guidance	The purpose of this guide is to assist Housing Counseling Agencies (HCAs) seeking to prepare their staff for disaster deployment.
Housing Counseling Disaster Resources	Research, report, or other guidance	A one-stop shop for questions about HUD's roles in disaster response and recovery.
Housing Counseling Disaster Recovery Toolkit	Research, report, or other guidance	This guide outlines the key actions that HCAs should take to prepare their operations, staff, and clients. The companion guide provides guidance on operating post-disaster.
Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities, Section VII. Meet Housing Needs for Different Ages and Incomes	Data or tool	The Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities tool is broad and interdisciplinary and can help communities identify gaps in their policies, plans, building codes, and zoning regulations by asking a series of "Yes" or "No" questions.
State of Delaware Verification Report: Spring 2024	Research, report, or other guidance	NFIP/CRS summary of state-based credit and other potential credit based on the 2017 CRS Coordinator's Manual and 2021 Addendum.
Trauma-Informed Disaster Response Course, General Services Administration	Research, report, or other guidance	This online course trains teams involved in disaster response and recovery on trauma, trauma-informed care techniques, and ways for staff to take care of themselves in disaster recovery work.
Virtual Exercise Best Practices, FEMA	Research, report, or other guidance	This FEMA guide provides best practices for conducting a virtual exercise, including benefits and challenges, considerations for platform testing and pre-conduct logistics, and actions to take before, during, and after an exercise.

PARTNERS

- Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA)
- Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA)
- Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- Delaware League of Local Governments (DLLG)
- University of Delaware (UDel)

Housing Recovery Planning and Policy Development

IN THIS SECTION

Housing recovery planning and policy development ensures that municipalities have clear strategies in place to address housing shortages, streamline rebuilding efforts, and support displaced residents following a disaster. By integrating disaster housing considerations into local policies and comprehensive plans, governments can enhance their ability to respond swiftly and equitably, reducing the long-term social and economic impacts of disasters on their communities.

- ●○○ Address disaster housing recovery in your existing local plans
- ●○○ Conduct a housing assessment/study to understand current supply of available housing, vulnerability of housing stock, and limitations post-disaster
- ●●○ Conduct a study/assessment or develop a tool to identify areas at high risk of hazard events like flooding or environmentally sensitive areas
- ●●○ Identify potential site(s) for interim housing
- ●●● Identify priority redevelopment areas/scenarios for post-disaster recovery
- ●●● Establish a post-disaster redevelopment plan
- ●●● Establish data systems to track recovery progress, housing availability, and community needs.

Resources: Templates, tools, and other resources to guide action development and implementation

Partners: Federal, state, local, and community partners involved in the development of the Disaster Housing Strategy that can provide support or guidance

LOCAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Address disaster housing recovery in your existing local plans

Municipalities do not need to start their disaster housing recovery planning by creating a new, standalone plan. Although a separate disaster recovery plan will be helpful, particularly for large jurisdictions facing high hazard risk and community vulnerabilities, a smaller jurisdiction with limited capacity may be better served by first integrating disaster housing considerations into its existing policies and planning documents. This includes comprehensive plans, neighborhood plans, hazard mitigation plans, and housing strategies. The integration of disaster housing considerations into existing planning documents allows municipalities to consider a holistic approach to disaster housing preparedness, including the impact of current land uses, development patterns, housing stock and affordable housing development, and community attributes and vulnerabilities.

Municipalities can use their regular planning processes to understand current conditions and establish clear frameworks and operations for post-disaster housing recovery. This work also enables municipalities to identify existing gaps in planning or policies that may hinder or slow housing recovery after a disaster. Further, incorporating disaster housing considerations into land use plans allows communities to align land use policies with long-term resilience goals, ensuring that rebuilding efforts do not reinforce existing vulnerabilities but instead contribute to a stronger and more sustainable housing stock. These plan updates should continue to be refined and revised after a disaster to reflect changing conditions or community priorities.

RESOURCE

FEMA's Integrating Hazard Mitigation Into Local Planning guide provides case studies and practical information to local government officials, community planners, and emergency managers on how to best integrate hazard mitigation into a community's existing plans, policies, codes, and programs.

HOUSING STOCK

Conduct a housing assessment/study to understand current supply of available housing, vulnerability of housing stock, and limitations post-disaster

DATA/TOOL

DNREC's Delaware Flood Planning Tool is an interactive web-based map tool designed to help research local flood risk in Delaware. It can be used to identify FEMA floodplains and zones, land and base flood elevations, watersheds, and other details by tax parcel across the state. It is a foundational place to start when assessing local hazards and flood risk.

Delaware jurisdictions should conduct a housing assessment to evaluate the current supply of available housing, identify vulnerabilities in the housing stock, and determine limitations that may arise post-disaster. This assessment informs both blue skies(pre-disaster) and post-disaster planning efforts, helping municipalities identify pre-existing gaps in affordability, habitability, and accessibility. The assessment also supports the prioritization of recovery investments and development of more equitable housing strategies. Ideally, this will be based on a survey conducted parcel by parcel and unit by unit, with a central recording location that is mappable and modifiable. Coordination with existing mapping tools, code enforcement processes, and risk assessment efforts. Data about housing and development supply and demand should be understood pre-disaster with the understanding that demand will likely increase, and supply will be more constrained post-disaster. The Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC) can support this process through its comprehensive planning review process, which can help municipalities align local assessments with broader land use and development strategies, including those of nearby jurisdictions. These reviews ensure that housing considerations are integrated into comprehensive plans and that planning efforts reflect statewide priorities for resilience and equity. Resources such as HUD's Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning Guide and FEMA's Planning for Post-Disaster Recovery guide can help structure these assessments. The University of Delaware and DSHA can assist with data collection and analysis to ensure assessments are grounded in up-to-date local context. Municipalities can also reference the statewide Housing Needs Assessment, which provides county-level data for jurisdictions to make decisions about housing and housing-related services and better coordinate resources.

HIGH HAZARD AREAS

Conduct a study/assessment or develop a tool to identify areas at high risk of hazard events like flooding or environmentally sensitive areas

To support disaster preparedness, local jurisdictions in Delaware should conduct a comprehensive study, assessment, or develop/use a tool to identify areas at high risk of hazard events, such as flooding or environmentally sensitive regions. This analysis will enable municipalities to incorporate hazard data into land-use planning, zoning regulations, and housing recovery strategies. Identifying high-risk areas ensures that mitigation measures—such as infrastructure improvements, updated building codes, or relocation incentives—are appropriately targeted and technical justification can help improve competitive funding applications. Tools already exist from the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) and Delaware Sea Grant to help begin the assessment process. A comprehensive hazards study can help local governments prioritize recovery resources and develop proactive strategies to minimize displacement and long-term community disruption. The Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA) and the Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA) can provide technical assistance and guidance for implementing these assessments, ensuring alignment with state and federal disaster resilience strategies.

CASE STUDY

Maui County, in partnership with University of Hawaii Sea Grant, developed a community-based process to understand the challenges facing coastal property owners and develop guidelines and protocols to strengthen the post-disaster recovery process. Communities used a decision matrix to determine permitting priority based on the extent of damage and the environmental sensitivity of the impacted area.

INTERIM HOUSING SITES

Identify potential site(s) for interim housing

CASE STUDY

The New York City Department of Emergency Management developed Playbook for Post Disaster Interim Housing to serve as a how-to guide for assessing the need for interim housing, where to site interim housing, and what it might look like.

Planning for interim housing before a disaster enables local governments to provide timely, safe housing options to displaced residents. Interim housing includes all intermediate housing between sheltering and the return of impacted residents to permanent housing.[4] This period typically starts around 14 days post-disaster as residents move out of shelters and can last as long as 18 to 24 months. Interim housing may include hotels and motels, dormitories, rental units, manufactured homes, or temporary trailers that provide a level of privacy typically lacking in emergency shelters but may not be satisfactory for permanent occupancy.

Delaware jurisdictions should identify and evaluate potential sites based on size, utility access, hazard exposure, and proximity to community services. These sites might host manufactured housing, trailers, or modular homes. The Playbook for Post-Disaster Interim Housing from NYC Emergency Management and FEMA's Disaster Housing Community Site Operations annex offer best practices for site evaluation and setup. Local coordination with Public Housing Authorities, Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA), emergency services, and major landholders will be essential for pre-disaster agreements and post-disaster activation. Using resources such as FirstMap and the Delaware Flood Planning Tool can help identify appropriate parcels based on size, accessibility, and hazard risk, while coordination with planning and zoning officials will ensure that siting can be streamlined when the need arises.

[4] FEMA (2020). Planning Considerations: Disaster Housing. Available at: https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/planning-considerations-disaster-housing.pdf.

PRIORITY REDEVELOPMENT AREAS

Identify priority redevelopment areas/scenarios for post-disaster recovery

While the goal of disaster housing recovery is to get residents back into safe, permanent housing as quickly and efficiently as possible, the recovery and rebuilding period presents an opportunity to prioritize redevelopment in key geographic areas, to reduce future hazard risk, protect environmentally sensitive areas, or to encourage development in areas identified for growth. Using GIS mapping tools and local geospatial data, planners can identify and refine a set of criteria for redevelopment prioritization. This process should also include input from the community to understand neighborhood-level impacts and concerns.

Identifying potential priority redevelopment areas in advance of a disaster can expedite recovery and ensure strategic investment in the most critical locations. These may include areas of low hazard risk, near job centers, transit, or historically underserved communities. Mapping these zones allows for more equitable and intentional recovery, avoiding ad hoc decision-making under pressure. Tools such as ESRI's Suitability Modeler or FEMA's Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning Guide can support the identification of redevelopment areas. Coordination with state agencies, like OSPC and DSHA during the Preliminary Land Use Service (PLUS) review process, and FEMA Region 3 will ensure these areas align with broader hazard mitigation and land use plans.

CASE STUDY

Hillsborough County, FL, in its Post-Disaster Redevelopment Plan, identified priority redevelopment areas (PRAs), which are a tool for prioritizing where rebuilding and redevelopment will occur after a disaster. The County used GIS mapping to identify Sustainable PRAs and Vulnerable PRAs. Sustainable PRAs are areas with low disaster vulnerability that can be sustainably redeveloped at a higher intensity while Vulnerable PRAs are areas of high vulnerability with essential facilities that are key to economic recovery; hazard mitigation investment is a priority in these areas.

REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

Establish a post-disaster redevelopment plan

A post-disaster redevelopment plan (PDRP) provides a structured roadmap for rebuilding and recovery. A comprehensive PDRP outlines the framework for how a community will rebuild after a major disaster, addressing not just physical reconstruction but also economic recovery, social equity, and environmental sustainability. The plan outlines a jurisdiction's redevelopment priorities, planning framework, funding strategy, and coordination process across departments and partners. This plan should incorporate pre-identified redevelopment areas, resilience goals, and procedures for streamlining permitting and zoning.

A successful PDRP is built on clear policies, roles, and procedures that can be activated immediately after a disaster. Municipalities may begin by convening a cross-sector planning team that includes representatives from emergency management, housing, planning, public works, public health, and community-based organizations, among others. The team should define long-term recovery goals, identify recovery priorities, and align the redevelopment strategy with existing comprehensive and hazard mitigation plans. Local governments can build on their existing comprehensive or hazard mitigation plans and adapt FEMA's Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning Guide or APA's Planning for Post-Disaster Recovery as guides. DSHA and DEMA can offer technical assistance, while state and regional partners such as OSPC and Delaware Sea Grant may assist in incorporating hazard and environmental data.

RESOURCE

A post-disaster redevelopment plan is required for all coastal counties and municipalities in Florida. Post-Disaster Redevelopment Planning: A Guide for Florida Communities was created to assist communities in developing a post-disaster redevelopment plan.

DATA SYSTEMS

Establish data systems to track recovery progress, housing availability, and community needs.

Data systems that monitor recovery progress are critical for transparency, accountability, and effective decision-making. Delaware jurisdictions should develop systems that integrate housing availability, damage assessments, rebuilding permits, and community needs. A centralized recovery data system should be developed before a disaster strikes, with protocols in place for collecting, integrating, and updating data from various sources.

Local governments may consider data systems for internal tracking as well as public reporting during recovery. Public reporting ensures accountability while giving residents, local officials, and recovery partners a shared understanding of progress and persistent challenges. Engaging community-based organizations as partners in data collection and validation can improve accuracy and build trust, especially in underserved communities where formal data may be incomplete or outdated.

GIS-based dashboards and interactive mapping tools, such as those available through ArcGIS Online, can help track these metrics in real time. Drawing from case studies such as the Oregon Department of Emergency Management's web-based situational awareness map, municipalities can ensure timely access to actionable recovery data for staff, partners, and the public.

CASE STUDY

The Oregon Department of Emergency Management (OEM), having historically struggled to maintain up-to-date maps and data for situational awareness during emergency response, implemented a web-based map tool to provide real-time data and enhance information sharing with counties and response partners.

RESOURCES

Resource	Resource Type	Description
Analyzing Suitability of Land for Affordable Housing, ESRI	Research, report, or other guidance	Research using a geographic information system (GIS) to analyze the suitability of land for affordable housing development in Delaware.
Considerations for Temporary Housing, University of North Carolina	Research, report, or other guidance	This post outlines policy considerations for permitting temporary housing, as well as the process for quickly acting on a zoning ordinance amendment.
Delaware FirstMap	Data or tool	Delaware FirstMap is the state's open data GIS site, providing data layers, imagery, and documents for sharing among State organizations, academia, local governments, and the general public.
Delaware Flood Planning Tool, Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC)	Data or tool	DNREC's Flood Planning Tool is an interactive web map designed to help research local flood risk in Delaware. It can be used to identify FEMA floodplains and zones, land and base flood elevations, watersheds, and other details by tax parcel across the state. It is a foundational place to start when assessing local hazards and flood risk.
Disaster Housing Community Site Operations, Annex 4 of the National Disaster Housing Strategy, FEMA	Research, report, or other guidance	This is an annex to FEMA's National Disaster Housing Strategy covering disaster housing group site operations.
Guidance for Disaster Recovery Preparedness in Hawaii, Sea Grant, University of Hawaii	Case study	In 2019, the Hawaii Sea Grant College Program, in coordination with state agencies, developed Guidance for Disaster Recovery Preparedness in Hawaii, a guidance document to improve community resilience to coastal hazards and sea level rise. The development of that document was informed by a workshop exercise scenario that considered how recovery would be impacted by a new disaster reconstruction ordinance. It defined scenarios, processes, and focus questions for group discussion. The exercise helped identify gaps, unanticipated issues, and priorities for moving forward.
Housing Needs Assessment, Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA)	Research, report, or other guidance	DSHA has released its 2023-2030 statewide Housing Needs Assessment. The Delaware Housing Needs Assessments are intended to frame the current housing conditions within the state and examine the significant trends and issues that will dictate housing policy over five years. Data is available at the county level.

Resource	Resource Type	Description
Housing Suitability Model, University of Florida	Data or tool	The Housing Suitability Model (HSM) from the University of Florida is a GIS-based tool for identifying locations suitable for affordable housing development and preservation.
National Risk Index, FEMA	Data or tool	FEMA's National Risk Index (NRI) allows users to explore natural hazard risk data across the United States.
Oklahoma Crowdsources Damage Assessments to Kick-Start Disaster Recovery, ESRI	Case study	After the 2019 flooding across Oklahoma, the state Department of Emergency Management (OEM) crowdsourced damage assessments using a web-based form. Those affected by floods could report damage using an ArcGIS Survey123 form. The office received approximately 2,600 submissions. Following data collection, OEM managed the data through an online dashboard that state and local emergency managers could access to get regular updates during response and recovery. As of June 2025, DEMA is working on developing a similar tool for crowdsourced damage assessments.
Planning for Post-Disaster Recovery: Next Generation, American Planning Association	Research, report, or other guidance	This guidebook prepares local planners for addressing post-disaster recovery. It provides considerations for long-term recovery and details case studies of recovery operations in cities and counties across the U.S.
Planning for Recovery Management, American Planning Association	Research, report, or other guidance	This guide from the American Planning Association describes how local governments can plan for recovery management, including defining the organizational structure for recovery and formalizing partnerships.
Playbook for Post Disaster Interim Housing, NYC Emergency Management	Case study	This case study from New York City imagines a hurricane and the resulting need for interim housing, where to site interim housing, and what it might look like.
Post-Disaster Reconstruction Guidelines and Protocols, Sea Grant, University of Hawaii	Case study	Maui County, in partnership with University of Hawaii Sea Grant, developed a community-based process to understand the challenges facing coastal property owners and develop guidelines and protocols to strengthen the post-disaster recovery process. Communities used a decision matrix to determine permitting priority based on the extent of damage and the environmental sensitivity of the impacted area.
Post-Disaster Redevelopment Plan, Hillsborough County, FL	Case study	Hillsborough County, FL developed a Post-Disaster Redevelopment Plan to better prepare the County for long-term redevelopment after a disaster. This planning process also included the development and implementation

Resource	Resource Type	Description
		of priority redevelopment areas (PRAs). PRAs are a tool for addressing the county's foremost redevelopment issue: prioritizing where rebuilding, reconstruction, and redevelopment will occur after a disaster. The County used GIS mapping to identify Sustainable PRAs and Vulnerable PRAs. Sustainable PRAs are areas with low disaster vulnerability that can be sustainably redeveloped at a higher intensity and are a focus of the County's land use plans. Vulnerable PRAs are areas with essential facilities that are key to economic recovery and have a high vulnerability to disasters; hazard mitigation investment is a priority in these areas.
Post-Disaster Redevelopment Planning: A Guide for Florida Communities	Research, report, or other guidance	A post-disaster redevelopment plan is required for all coastal counties and municipalities in Florida. Post-Disaster Redevelopment Planning: A Guide for Florida Communities was created to assist communities in developing a post-disaster redevelopment plan.
Potential Land Suitability for New Temporary or Permanent Housing, Center for Pacific Urbanism	Case study	In 2023, the Center for Pacific Urbanism conducted a land suitability analysis for new temporary or permanent housing in the city of Los Angeles near homeless encampments. Criteria included government parcels greater than 10,000 square feet, no recreational use, no portions of sites with greater than 15% slope, no land with existing buildings, and land outside of significant ecological areas. Additional data included distance to sewer lines, distance to fire hydrants, distance to public streets, distance to freeways, land value, and fire hazard severity zone.
Pre-Disaster Housing Planning Guide	Research, report, or other guidance	This document provides guidance for state, local, and tribal governments on developing and implementing pre-disaster housing plans and strategies.
Preliminary Damage Assessment Guide, FEMA	Research, report, or other guidance	The Preliminary Damage Assessment Guide is a standard framework for how emergency management officials conduct preliminary damage assessments (PDAs) following a disaster.
Suitability Modeler, ESRI	Data or tool	A GIS-based tool for identifying the best location to site things or areas to preserve.

PARTNERS

- Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA)
- Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA)
- Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC)
- Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC)
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- Delaware Sea Grant
- Delaware Manufactured Homeowners Association (DMHOA)
- Energize Delaware
- First State Community Action Agency (FSCAA)
- Habitat for Humanity
- Housing Alliance Delaware
- Local Public Housing Authorities (PHAs)
- Milford Housing Development Corporation (MHDC)
- University of Delaware (UDel)

Land Use and Development

IN THIS SECTION

Municipalities can incorporate housing recovery and resilience measures into their **land use and development** strategies to promote safer, more sustainable housing that can withstand disasters and reduce future recovery costs. Thoughtful zoning regulations, building codes, and land use policies can enable more resilient development and minimize exposure to hazards by steering development away from high-risk areas such as floodplains. Smart growth strategies, such as allowing for a diverse mix of housing types, can ensure that communities have sufficient existing housing stock to reduce housing shortages that may be exacerbated post-disaster.

- ●○○ Adopt and enforce the most recent edition of natural hazard-resistant building codes
- ●○○ Prohibit or limit development in the floodplain through incentive-based measures
- ●●○ Adopt a pre-disaster recovery ordinance
- ●●○ Adopt an ordinance that allows for temporary emergency land uses during rebuilding
- ●●○ Develop incentives to increase the supply of affordable housing
- ●●● Adopt a post-disaster building moratorium on new development or rebuilding in high hazard or environmentally sensitive areas to ensure strategic recovery
- ●●● Adopt building and zoning codes that permit smaller lot sizes and building footprints to allow for a mix of housing types

Resources: Templates, tools, and other resources to guide action development and implementation

Partners: Federal, state, local, and community partners involved in the development of the Disaster Housing Strategy that can provide support or guidance

BUILDING CODES

Adopt and enforce the most recent edition of natural hazard-resistant building codes

Delaware jurisdictions should adopt and enforce the latest edition of hazard-resistant building codes to improve structural safety and minimize disaster-related damage. This includes codes that address wind resistance, floodproofing, and seismic resilience. Statewide alignment with the International Codes (I-Codes) can improve insurance ratings and disaster funding eligibility.

DATA/TOOL

Municipalities can use FEMA's Building Code Adoption Tracking (BCAT) Portal to explore building code adoption and make comparisons to other jurisdictions.

Municipalities should review their current codes and adoption practices and update local building ordinances to align with the latest standards. Consistent enforcement is equally important to adoption. Municipalities should invest in adequately trained building officials, inspectors, and plan reviewers who understand the nuances of modern hazard-resistant codes. Establishing clear inspection protocols and maintaining oversight throughout the permitting and construction process ensures that new buildings are not only properly permitted, but also built to code. Where capacity is limited, municipalities can partner with regional building departments, state agencies, or professional associations to access training, peer review, or shared enforcement resources.

For more guidance on how to assess your current codes and staff capacity, see the sections on Local and State Code Assessment and Staff Capacity Assessment. DNREC, DEMA, and local building code officials can provide guidance on state-level code adoption and enforcement resources.

FLOODPLAIN DEVELOPMENT

Prohibit or limit development in the floodplain through incentive-based or regulatory measures

Prohibiting or limiting development in floodplains through regulatory or incentive-based measures can significantly reduce future risk. Strategies may include downzoning or rezoning to restrict development in high-risk areas, implementing zoning overlays, floodplain ordinances, and elevation requirements, as well as incentive-based measures that encourage growth away from high-risk areas. These might include density transfers, conservation easements, or financial incentives for relocating development out of high-risk areas.

Public engagement is essential to the success of floodplain management strategies. Clear, consistent messaging about flood risks and the long-term costs of building in flood-prone areas helps build community support for development restrictions. Municipalities should work closely with residents, developers, and local businesses to design policies that are fair, transparent, and aligned with community values. These measures should be coordinated with DNREC's Floodplain Management Program and the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Including these restrictions in local zoning ordinances and comprehensive plans ensures long-term consistency and helps protect life and property.

PRE-DISASTER RECOVERY ORDINANCE

Adopt a pre-disaster recovery ordinance

In the immediate aftermath of a disaster, localities must take swift action to facilitate recovery for residents. Adopting an ordinance prior to a disaster event positions a jurisdiction to take rapid actions to address recovery. Additionally, the development of a pre-disaster recovery ordinance prepares local governments to communicate and coordinate with state and local entities during and after a disaster event.

A pre-disaster recovery ordinance should provide a foundation for efficiently managing short- and long-term recovery, preferably in advance of a declared disaster, as well as after. A pre-disaster recovery ordinance typically includes temporary and special regulations, which are crucial in the early recovery process. Temporary and special regulations are particularly useful in getting damaged homes back into habitable condition, cutting down on sheltering time and the need for interim housing. A pre-disaster recovery ordinance can serve as a precursor to a jurisdiction's comprehensive recovery plan.

A pre-disaster recovery ordinance grants temporary regulatory modifications to the municipal code. These regulatory modifications provide expedited planning and permitting actions for recovery. These special regulations include provisions for:

- Environmental clearances
- Debris clearance and hazard abatement
- Damage assessment and placarding
- Development moratoria to assure public health and safety
- Temporary use and repair permits
- Deferral of fees for repair and rebuilding permits
- Continuity of nonconforming buildings and uses, accompanied by safety upgrades
- One-stop service centers
- Demolition of damaged historic buildings
- Emergency contractor certification

The jurisdiction's elected governing body would author and pass the ordinance, which serves as a source of regulation to establish the powers to be implemented upon declaration of a local emergency by which staff of building, planning, public works, and other departments can modify standard regulations to expedite recovery or intervention on matters dealing with private property to protect public health and safety.

A pre-disaster recovery ordinance will provide both the legal authority for actions commonly found useful in expediting recovery, and the emergency powers necessary to protect public health and safety. Quick actions are important for jump-starting recovery, but regulatory modifications should be undertaken with long-term recovery in mind. The pre-disaster recovery ordinance should strike a balance between the regulatory streamlining needed to facilitate recovery and intervention necessary to preserve recovery choices for the future.

Where possible, the recovery ordinance should be prepared and adopted before a disaster event occurs and then updated periodically as necessary.

EMERGENCY LAND USE

Adopt an ordinance that allows for temporary emergency land uses during rebuilding

Local governments can adopt pre-disaster ordinances that allow temporary emergency land uses during disaster recovery. This could include permitting commercial buildings to serve as temporary shelters or allowing homeowners to temporarily live in trailers or RVs on their property during rebuilding. These ordinances can be adopted pre-disaster and can be designed to activate automatically or through an expedited process once a state of emergency is declared, allowing for rapid deployment without lengthy delays.

Creating flexible policies can speed up delivery of sheltering and interim housing solutions. Key elements of the ordinance should include clear definitions of allowable temporary uses, time limits, public health and safety requirements, and site suitability standards. For example, municipalities can allow vacant commercial buildings to be repurposed as temporary housing or community support hubs, provided they meet basic habitability codes and fire safety standards. Likewise, homeowners should be permitted to place RVs or temporary structures on their parcels during reconstruction, with reasonable conditions related to sanitation, setbacks, and utility hookups. These temporary allowances reduce displacement, prevent population loss, and support residents' ability to participate in the rebuilding of their homes and communities.

Municipalities should also consider streamlining permitting processes and providing technical assistance to help residents take advantage of emergency land use options. Coordination with code enforcement and public health agencies—to ensure that temporary structures meet basic safety standards and do not interfere with recovery efforts—is important to ensure safety and minimize community disruption.

CASE STUDY

After the Kincade Fire in 2019, Sonoma County, CA adopted an Urgency Ordinance to expedite housing recovery and provide interim housing solutions for residents. The ordinance expands permitted uses of recreational vehicles, allows existing accessory structures to be used as temporary housing, and waives permitting fees for accessory dwelling units that are constructed in tandem with primary dwellings in the fire burn area.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING INCENTIVES

Develop incentives to increase the supply of affordable housing

Expanding the supply of affordable housing is essential to ensuring recovery meets the needs of all residents and supports a healthy housing market during blue-sky periods. Local municipalities can consider and implement a range of incentives to stimulate the development and preservation of affordable housing. Delaware jurisdictions can develop and implement incentives such as density bonuses, reduced parking requirements, expedited permitting, fee waivers, or tax abatements to support the development of affordable units. Beyond incentives for new construction, municipalities can also develop strategies to preserve existing affordable housing stock. This includes offering grants or forgivable loans to rehabilitate or retrofit aging homes or offering tax incentives for landlords who maintain affordable units. These policies can help reduce displacement, especially for low-income or vulnerable households. DSHA and Housing Alliance Delaware can support municipalities in designing and financing affordable housing programs that align with broader recovery goals.

RESOURCE

The National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC) has resources for local jurisdictions seeking to improve affordable housing supply and access.

BUILDING MORATORIUM

Adopt a post-disaster building moratorium on new development or rebuilding in high hazard or environmentally sensitive areas to ensure strategic recovery

While municipalities may face intense pressure to rebuild quickly after a disaster, uncoordinated development can compound future risks and undermine long-term resilience. To ensure strategic recovery following a disaster, Delaware jurisdictions should consider adopting a temporary building moratorium on new development or rebuilding in high hazard or environmentally sensitive areas. A moratorium can pause new construction, major renovations, or certain permits in designated zones while local leaders evaluate whether rebuilding in those areas is appropriate or if alternative strategies are more sustainable. This pause allows time for damage assessments, hazard re-evaluations, and thoughtful planning of recovery investments. A moratorium can prevent redevelopment that reinforces risk and ensure alignment with broader resilience and equity goals.

RESOURCE

Planning for Hazards: Land Use Solutions for Colorado provides information on how to implement a building moratorium after a disaster and where it has been implemented.

To adopt an effective post-disaster moratorium, municipalities can establish legal mechanisms and criteria in their local codes. This includes defining the geographic scope of the pause as well as the conditions under which a moratorium can be triggered. After a disaster, local governments should clearly communicate to the public the rationale behind the moratorium, its intended duration, and the process for evaluating redevelopment options. Exemptions may be considered for critical infrastructure repairs or temporary housing, but these should be narrowly defined to prevent unintended consequences. OSPC and DNREC tools can assist with identifying hazard-prone areas and reviewing consistency with comprehensive plans and environmental regulations.

DIVERSE HOUSING TYPES

Adopt building and zoning codes that permit smaller lot sizes and building footprints to allow for a mix of housing types

Adopting zoning codes that permit smaller lot sizes (or eliminate minimum lot sizes) and building footprints can diversify the local housing stock and enable a broader range of post-disaster housing types, including accessory dwelling units (ADUs), cottages, and duplexes. Traditional zoning often prioritizes large lot, single-family homes, limiting density and driving up land costs. Municipalities can make more efficient use of land by reducing minimum lot size requirements and allowing for more compact development that can accommodate a variety of household sizes and income levels. These zoning updates can reduce development costs and increase affordability.

CASE STUDY

The City of Norfolk, VA offers a guidebook for developers to encourage the implementation of "missing middle" housing. Missing middle is a term used to describe a range of house-scale buildings with multiple units—compatible in scale and form with detached single-family homes—located in a walkable neighborhood. The guidebook provides examples including floor plans and renderings, site plans, zoning guidance, and descriptions of approved materials and finishes.

Revising zoning codes to allow "missing middle" housing types—such as triplexes, fourplexes, and courtyard apartments—can help fill the gap between single-family homes and large multifamily complexes.[5] These housing forms are often more affordable by design and integrate well into existing neighborhoods. Municipalities can further support the development of diverse housing typologies by adjusting height restrictions, setback requirements, and parking mandates that may otherwise prevent smaller-scale development from being feasible. Design guidelines can be implemented to ensure that new housing fits the character of the surrounding area while meeting density and affordability goals.

To encourage adoption and community support, municipalities should pair zoning reforms with public engagement strategies that highlight the benefits of housing diversity—such as increased economic resilience, walkability, and support for local businesses. Incentive programs, streamlined approvals, and demonstration projects can help build confidence among residents and developers. Additionally, OSPC can help review proposed zoning code updates through its comprehensive plan review process to ensure alignment with broader housing, infrastructure, and resilience objectives.

[5] Missing Middle Housing. Available at: https://missingmiddlehousing.com/.

RESOURCES

Resource	Resource Type	Description
Adopt a Pre-Event Recovery Ordinance, American Planning Association	Research, report, or other guidance	This resource provides local jurisdictions a guide for adopting a pre-disaster recovery ordinance.
Building Consensus in Florida on a Statewide Building Code	Case study	After Hurricane Andrew in 1992, Florida communities faced delays during the rebuilding process due to inconsistent building code adoption and enforcement throughout the state. In 1998, following the recommendation of the Building Code Study Commission, the Florida Building Commission sought to create a statewide building code standard. The Florida Building Code was adopted in 2001 and reduced windstorm losses by up to 72%.
Building Code Adoption Tracking (BCAT) Portal, FEMA	Data or tool	Municipalities can use FEMA's BCAT Portal to explore building code adoption and make comparisons to other jurisdictions.
Disaster Housing Construction Challenges in America: Exploring the Role of Factory-Built Housing, MIT Center for Transportation & Logistics	Research, report, or other guidance	With a focus on new construction (as opposed to repairs), this report examines the distinction between temporary and permanent housing and explores the potential for factory-built housing to be utilized, at scale, as a regular tool for disaster recovery.
Harris County, TX approves new building regulations post-Harvey	Case study	Harris County, TX requires new homes and businesses in the 100-year floodplain to be built two feet above the 500-year floodplain
Local Mitigation Planning Policy Guide, FEMA	Research, report, or other guidance	The Local Mitigation Planning Policy Guide is FEMA's official policy on, and interpretation of, local hazard mitigation planning requirements. The guide facilitates consistent evaluation and approval of local mitigation plans and compliance with the mitigation planning requirements when updating plans.
Missing Middle Housing Pattern Book, City of Norfolk, VA	Case study	The City of Norfolk, VA offers a guidebook for developers to encourage the implementation of "missing middle" housing. Missing middle is a term used to describe a range of house-scale buildings with multiple units—compatible in scale and form with detached single-family homes—located in a walkable neighborhood. The guidebook provides examples including

Resource	Resource Type	Description
		floor plans and renderings, site plans, zoning guidance, and descriptions of approved materials and finishes.
Model Pre-Event Recovery Ordinance, American Planning Association	Template	This is a model pre-disaster recovery ordinance discussed in the resource above.
National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC)	Research, report, or other guidance	The NLIHC has resources for local jurisdictions seeking to improve affordable housing supply and access.
Post-Disaster Building Moratorium, Planning for Hazards	Research, report, or other guidance	This post provides information on how to implement a building moratorium after a disaster and where it has been implemented.
Protecting Communities and Saving Money: The Case for Adopting Building Codes, FEMA	Research, report, or other guidance	This report from FEMA provides an overview of the financial impact of disasters and the benefits of adopting strong building codes.
Resilient Building Codes: Making the Business Case, HUD	Research, report, or other guidance	This resource discusses the importance of resilient building codes and the cost implications of resilience measures.
Sonoma County, CA Disaster Recovery Ordinance	Template	This is the ordinance language used in Sonoma County's Urgency Ordinance referenced above.
Temporary dwellings during reconstruction, Ventura County, CA Zoning Code	Template	Ventura County, CA has a section of its zoning code that allows for mobile homes, travel trailers, or manufactured buildings to be used as a temporary dwelling unit by residents of dwellings involuntarily damaged or destroyed by a natural disaster.
Urgency Ordinance for Post-Disaster Housing, Sonoma County, CA	Case study	After the Kincade Fire in 2019, Sonoma County, CA adopted an Urgency Ordinance to expedite housing recovery and provide interim housing solutions for residents.

PARTNERS

- Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA)
- Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA)
- Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- Delaware League of Local Governments (DLLG)
- Delaware Sea Grant
- University of Delaware (UDel)

Post-Disaster Permitting

IN THIS SECTION

Post-disaster permitting is crucial for local governments to facilitate efficient and resilient disaster housing recovery. Streamlined permitting processes can help expedite reconstruction while ensuring that rebuilding efforts adhere to updated safety and resilience standards. Clear guidelines and pre-established temporary emergency permitting procedures allow municipalities to balance speed with quality control, preventing unsafe development in hazard-prone areas. Effective post-disaster permitting can expedite the return of displaced residents while ensuring rebuilding considers future hazards.

- ●○○ Enable tracking of disaster-related building permits during recovery
- ●●○ Adopt an ordinance that allows for expedited permitting during rebuilding
- ●●○ Adopt an ordinance that waives permit fees during rebuilding
- ●●○ Adopt an ordinance that waives permits for temporary emergency repairs during rebuilding
- ●●○ Enable expedited rental licensing post-disaster for those renting to displaced residents
- ●●● Establish post-disaster permitting/reconstruction guidelines to expedite permitting based on the type and extent of damage

Resources: Templates, tools, and other resources to guide action development and implementation

Partners: Federal, state, local, and community partners involved in the development of the Disaster Housing Strategy that can provide support or guidance

DISASTER PERMIT TRACKING

Enable tracking of disaster-related building permits during recovery

Post-disaster permit tracking is a critical tool for understanding and guiding recovery efforts in the aftermath of a disaster. By documenting permit activity, jurisdictions can assess the pace and scope of rebuilding and identify patterns in recovery. This data helps answer essential questions about recovery and rebuilding efforts, and inform resiliency and mitigation measures. Metrics like permit applications, issue dates, location, permit types, value assessments, and the extent of damage can be analyzed to provide a comprehensive picture of post-disaster progress. Moreover, proper tracking supports eligibility for state or federal recovery funding, especially when tied to clear documentation of construction activity and associated costs. Even when permitting fees are waived, it is important to capture this information to avoid underestimating the scale of rebuilding.

RESOURCE

The Transportation Research Board published a book that documents the experiences of state departments of transportation (DOTs) with federal disaster reimbursement programs. The report includes an overview and example of project coding.

To implement an effective post-disaster permit tracking system, jurisdictions should begin by ensuring that all construction-related activity—whether full rebuilds or repairs—is properly documented, even if "free permitting" or waivers are in place. This may involve updating permitting databases to include disaster-specific codes or tags that indicate the level of damage (e.g., No Damage, Limited, Moderate, Extensive, or Catastrophic) and whether flooding or ground saturation was involved. Tracking both permit applications and closed permits is important to distinguish between projects that were initiated and those that were completed. Local governments should also consider integrating GIS tools to map permit activity spatially, making it easier to identify gaps in recovery and prioritize resources accordingly. With thoughtful planning, disaster permit tracking can become a foundational component of long-term recovery and resilience building.

EXPEDITED PERMITTING

Adopt an ordinance that allows for expedited permitting during rebuilding

Adopting an ordinance for expedited permitting offers jurisdictions a powerful tool to streamline recovery following a disaster. A key benefit of advanced planning is the ability to identify inefficiencies or gaps in existing permitting processes and address them before a crisis occurs. By codifying improvements—such as pre-approved building plans, automatic triggers for temporary regulatory changes, and clear procedural guidelines—jurisdictions can activate these measures quickly and effectively when disaster strikes. This minimizes delays caused by overwhelmed systems and reduces the burden on staff and residents during high-stress situations. For instance, pre-approved house plans can significantly accelerate rebuilding by allowing homeowners to bypass lengthy design and approval phases if they choose to reconstruct their homes "as-is." Including expedited permitting provisions within a broader recovery ordinance ensures these tools are integrated into the community's legal framework and can be activated immediately under clearly defined conditions.

RESOURCE

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources published the Post-Disaster Recovery and Redevelopment Planning guide which features the Brantley County Disaster Recovery and Redevelopment Plan. This plan provides an array of ordinance language that covers several recovery and rebuilding topics, including expedited permitting and the creation of a one-stop shop.

Implementation of expedited permitting is most effective when a one-stop service center is established. This centralized approach enables better coordination across departments and with external partners, such as insurance agencies and aid organizations. A one-stop center can offer residents faster access to permits, assistance programs, and recovery resources, accelerating both short-term stabilization and long-term rebuilding. The one-stop center serves as the public-facing hub for streamlined service delivery. These systems improve operational efficiency and reduce confusion, while fostering community trust and resilience by making the recovery process more accessible, transparent, and responsive.

WAIVED PERMIT FEES

Adopt an ordinance that waives permit fees during rebuilding

Permit fee waivers following a disaster event can significantly ease the burden on communities, helping residents and businesses recover more quickly. Revenue from permit fees is typically used for infrastructure projects, administrative functions, and other planned community needs. However, in the aftermath of a disaster, eliminating certain permit fees can facilitate the rebuilding process by reducing financial barriers. Jurisdictions should carefully consider the feasibility of such waivers, taking into account the potential costs and benefits. While waiving fees reduces critical revenue, it can also provide immediate financial relief to property owners, enabling them to focus resources on essential repairs and rebuilding efforts. A clear timeframe for these waivers must be set to avoid long-term disruption to the jurisdiction's finances, with a cap on the number of waivers granted to maintain fiscal responsibility.

An ordinance that allows fee waivers can provide a structured and transparent framework for post-disaster recovery It is essential for jurisdictions to determine which fees will be waived, considering the specific uses of revenue generated by those fees. Jurisdictions should also decide whether waivers will apply to all permit fees or only to specific types of projects, such as renovations to affordable housing. Eligibility criteria should be clearly defined, with some communities limiting waivers to non-profit developers or those meeting affordability criteria, while others restrict eligibility to property owners in good standing with the city. By creating clear rules and guidelines, jurisdictions can ensure that fee waivers are distributed equitably, targeting the most critical recovery needs. This process involves assessing whether building or development codes can be easily amended to accommodate these waivers in the event of a disaster, providing an efficient and streamlined recovery process.

CASE STUDY

Flagstaff, AZ City Code Chapter 10-18 Development Fees, was adopted by an ordinance in 208. This chapter establishes uniform procedures for imposing, calculating, collecting, and waiving fees imposed on new development. The *General Provisions: Applicability* section of Chapter 10-18 clearly defines the types of development that are not affected by development fees, which includes developments that do not see a net increase in square footage.

PERMIT WAIVERS FOR EMERGENCY REPAIRS

Adopt an ordinance that waives permits for temporary emergency repairs during rebuilding

RESOURCE

The Bay Area Disaster Recovery Permit and Regulation Waiver Toolkit presents a suggested process for planning and requesting regulation and/or permit waivers in the interest of expediting disaster recovery.

Adopting an ordinance that waives permits for temporary emergency repairs during the early phases of disaster recovery can significantly speed up the rebuilding process while ensuring that safety standards remain intact. By proactively planning for such regulatory waivers before a disaster occurs, jurisdictions can minimize delays in decision-making and response once recovery begins. These waivers are designed to reduce the burden on property owners, allowing them to make immediate, essential repairs—such as covering damaged roofs or walls with temporary materials—without waiting for permit approval. However, it is critical that any ordinance clearly defines the scope of the waiver, including which types of permits are temporarily suspended, the types of repairs allowed, and the time period during which the waiver is valid. This balance between flexibility and oversight supports faster stabilization of damaged structures while still protecting public safety and recovery integrity.

Implementing such an ordinance requires careful planning and a stakeholder-driven approach to ensure the waivers align with overall recovery goals. Although pre-disaster planning is ideal, local governments must be prepared to develop or adjust waivers on the fly based on the nature and scale of the event. The ordinance should include requirements for property owners to document damage—such as photos or inspection reports—and to submit a formal permit application for emergency repairs within a set period after the work begins. This ensures that temporary work can be tracked and transitioned into permanent repairs when appropriate. Ultimately, well-crafted emergency permitting waivers can provide communities with the flexibility they need in a crisis, while preserving the structure and accountability of the permitting system.

EXPEDITED RENTAL LICENSING

Enable expedited rental licensing post-disaster for those renting to displaced residents

Title 25 Section 5305 of the Delaware Code of Ordinances states that a landlord's obligation includes compliance with "all applicable provisions of any state or local statute, code, regulation or ordinance governing the maintenance, construction, use or appearance of the rental unit and the property of which it is a part." Communities such as Rehoboth Beach, Newark and Wilmington require landlords to obtain a residential rental license, or permit, prior to leasing their properties. These permits and licenses are used to ensure rental properties are free of visible life safety issues through mandatory exterior and common area inspections and voluntary interior inspections[6]. Generally, to obtain a license, landlords must first obtain and maintain the license, register all rental properties, and submit to interior and exterior inspections.

While rental licensing plays an important role in maintaining safe and decent housing stock, the need for expedited rental licensing can be critical in preventing displacement or homelessness following a disaster. To facilitate rapid rehousing recover, expedited rental licensing for landlords renting to displaced residents can be enabled by streamlining the licensing process. This can include prioritizing applications from landlords renting to displaced residents, reducing required license application documentation, and creating temporary waivers for certain licensing requirements.

CASE STUDY

Following the 2022 Marshall Fire, the City of Boulder, CO issued an emergency order that loosened requirements for those seeking to obtain a rental license. Residents seeking a license under the relaxed licensing terms needed to provide an affidavit that the property would house someone displaced by the disaster and pass an inspection for certain conditions.

[6] Newark, Delaware. Rental Permits. Available at: https://newarkde.gov/96/Rental-Permits.

POST-DISASTER PERMITTING GUIDELINES

Establish post-disaster permitting/reconstruction guidelines to expedite permitting based on the type and extent of damage

Identifying local government requirements is critical to meeting the housing needs of disaster survivors, so they can begin their recovery.[7] Establishing guidelines for permitting and rebuilding after a disaster during blue skies is crucial, especially once a community has adopted provisions such as fee and permit waivers. Having a centralized place detailing the thresholds for permit exceptions and fee waivers will accelerate the rebuilding process. Additionally, post-disaster permitting guidelines will aid in post-disaster capacity building by serving as a clearinghouse of the forms and information needed to assist residents and outside entities alike in the rebuilding process, such specific accreditation requirements for visiting code officials.

CASE STUDY

The City of Santa Rosa Resilient City Zoning Guide is a comprehensive document that provides a roadmap of the phases and key activities in the rebuilding process. The guide includes characteristics of fast-track, expedited, and prioritized plan to accelerate plan-review processes and fee-waivers.

[7] Disaster Housing Construction Challenges in American: Exploring the Role of Factory-Built Housing. MIT Center for Transportation & Logistics. October 2019. Windle, Michale, Sarah Quaraishi, and Jarrod Goentzel. Available online at: https://humanitarian.mit.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/MIT_HSCL_Housing_Report_final_102819_HigherRes.pdf.

RESOURCES

Resource	Resource Type	Description
Bay Area Disaster Recovery Permit and Regulation Waiver Toolkit	Research, report, or other guidance	The Bay Area Disaster Recovery Permit and Regulation Waiver Planning Toolkit (Toolkit) is designed to assist local jurisdictions in planning for and requesting waivers for various permits and regulations to expedite post-disaster recovery processes.
Bill 21, Emergency Repair Provisions, Maui County	Template	To expedite recovery and rebuilding after the 2023 wildfires in Maui, HI, Maui County Council approved a bill that would clarify procedures for issuing emergency building permits. The bill consolidates electrical, plumbing, grading, and driveway permits into one application and establishes a 15-day approval period for the wildfire affected areas. The bill also defers permit fees for residential structures until final inspection. Disaster-affected applications will be flagged for staff reviewing permits.
Boulder issues emergency order relaxing rental requirements to house people displaced by the Marshall Fire	Case study	This 2022 article provides an overview of the relaxed rental license requirements issued by an emergency order to help address the known shortage of housing in Boulder and the surrounding communities following the Marshall Fire.
Delaware Non-Resident Contractors Package	Research, report, or other guidance	Any contractors conducting business activity in Delaware are required to register with and obtain a business license from the Delaware Division of Revenue.
Flagstaff, AZ City Code, Chapter 10-18 Development Fees	Case study	This chapter of Flagstaff, AZ's City code was adopted by Ordinance 2008-28, and details the purpose and intent and applicability of development fees, as well as the situations in which development fees do not apply.
Fort Lauderdale, FL Disaster Permits	Case study	Fort Lauderdale waiver for permitting fees for flood-related repairs
Hillsborough County, FL Work Exempt from Permits	Case study	Hillsborough County, FL allows permit applications to be postponed for thirty working days for emergency repairs
Local Housing Solutions: Reduced or waived fees for qualifying projects	Research, report, or other guidance	An overview of variety of ways that jurisdictions can make fee waivers and reductions available to developers of qualifying projects.
National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Synthesis 472: FEMA and FHWA	Case study	This book documents the experiences of state departments of transportation (DOTs) with federal disaster reimbursement programs. The

Resource	Resource Type	Description
Emergency Relief Funds Reimbursements to State Departments of Transportation		report summarizes efforts and enhancements made by DOTs to secure appropriate reimbursements and simplify cost identification.
Post-Disaster Recovery and Redevelopment Planning	Research, report, or other guidance	This guide from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources addresses the basics of what Post-Disaster Recovery and Redevelopment Plans are, what current state and federal requirements are, how Recovery and Redevelopment Plans will interact with other plans and provides an overview of the planning processes employed in the pilot communities.

PARTNERS

- Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA)
- Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA)
- Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- Delaware League of Local Governments (DLLG)
- Delaware Sea Grant
- University of Delaware (UDel)

Housing Assistance and Mitigation Programs

IN THIS SECTION

Housing assistance and mitigation programs can be implemented before or after a disaster and can focus on a variety of supports, including retrofitting homes to be more resilient to natural hazards, stormwater management, homeowner assistance for repair or rebuilding, emergency rental assistance, or affordable housing development. These programs may be implemented directly by the local municipality or through a community-based partner organization and can be funded through federal grants, state funding, local funding like municipal bonds, or philanthropic and private funding.

- ●○○ Identify local community-based partners for program implementation or coordination
- ●●● Develop a rental assistance program
- ●●● Develop a home retrofit or home repair/rebuilding assistance program
- ●●● Establish local funding mechanisms or identify potential funding sources for housing/mitigation assistance
- ●●● Develop post-disaster tenant protections

Resources: Templates, tools, and other resources to guide action development and implementation

Partners: Federal, state, local, and community partners involved in the development of the Disaster Housing Strategy that can provide support or guidance

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Identify local community-based partners for program implementation or coordination

Municipal governments play a critical role in preparing communities for disasters, but effective preparedness efforts require collaboration with local partners. By leveraging the expertise, resources, and networks of community-based organizations, municipalities can enhance their capacity to implement comprehensive disaster housing preparedness programs.

Community-based organizations often have the local knowledge and expertise to directly implement, or support the implementation of, housing assistance or mitigation programs. These partners, because they often work directly with communities and have established trust in those communities, may be better positioned to provide support to populations with specific needs or hard-to-reach communities. Community-based organizations can also provide guidance on how best to prioritize preparedness efforts and outreach.

Before program implementation, municipalities should identify and coordinate with all relevant community partners. Once local partners are identified, municipalities should establish clear roles and responsibilities, facilitate regular communication, and provide training and capacity-building opportunities. Hosting community preparedness workshops, creating advisory committees, and developing formal agreements can strengthen collaboration and long-term engagement. By fostering these strategic partnerships, municipalities can build a resilient network of local organizations, businesses, and community leaders, ensuring a proactive and coordinated approach to disaster housing preparedness.

RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Develop a rental assistance program

A rental assistance program provides financial support to individuals and families who are struggling to pay their rent, typically due to a temporary financial hardship such as job loss, illness, or disasters. These programs provide direct payments to landlords or tenants to cover a portion or the entirety of rent payments, ensuring that people can stay in their homes during times of crisis.

During disasters, rental assistance programs become especially crucial for ensuring the stability of a community. Disasters can lead to economic disruption, making it difficult for residents to maintain their housing due to job loss, displacement, or damage to properties. In these circumstances, rental assistance provides an immediate safety net, helping individuals and families remain housed, reducing the risk of homelessness, and ensuring that affected communities can recover more quickly.

A rental assistance program can be implemented by a local government or a community-based organization, and financing may come from federal, state, local, or private funds. Municipalities may consider expanding or strengthening partnerships with community-based organizations that are implementing rental assistance programs or other financial assistance programs. These partners can provide the institutional knowledge and expertise needed to develop, manage, and track assistance programs, whether in blue skies or after a disaster.

DATA/TOOL

The Urban Institute has created a mapping tool to visualize neighborhoods with the highest risk of housing instability and homelessness. This can help local decisionmakers identify neighborhoods with the greatest need for rental assistance.

HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Develop a home retrofit or home repair/rebuilding assistance program

While municipalities may implement home repair and rebuilding programs after a disaster to return the housing stock to its pre-disaster state, municipalities can take actions during the preparedness phase to enable homeowners to better recover after a disaster. This includes assisting homeowners in repairing or retrofitting homes to improve property-level and neighborhood resilience against future hazards. One of the most effective ways to incentivize local property owners to make resilient upgrades to their homes is to develop property-level mitigation programs, which may include property updates like green infrastructure, elevation, resilient retrofits, or floodproofing. These programs can help reduce future disaster costs and improve housing stability in the long term.

CASE STUDY

The New Orleans Redevelopment Authority (NORA) implemented residential stormwater management improvements to owner-occupied homes using funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) National Disaster Resilience Competition grant.

The primary objectives of a home retrofit or repair program should include strengthening homes to withstand and minimize damage from future hazards, providing financial assistance and/or technical support to homeowners, and ultimately reducing the risk of displacement and economic loss due to disasters. Local municipalities may partner with state agencies or local community-based organizations to identify funding, maximize resources, and streamline delivery.

Municipalities interested in a retrofit program should identify existing partnerships and programs, conduct a risk assessment to understand the priority areas (e.g., high-risk neighborhoods) and/or areas of focus for retrofits (e.g., stormwater management landscaping, elevation, weatherization, etc.), and determine program eligibility, prioritization, and monitoring processes.

PROGRAM FUNDING

Establish local funding mechanisms or identify potential funding sources for housing/mitigation assistance

Financial resources for housing recovery will depend upon the extent of a disaster and if there is a federal disaster declaration, which will allow for the release of federal funding for response and recovery. Historically, Delaware has experienced smaller scale disasters that do not receive federal disaster declarations. In the event of a future disaster, the impacted region will need to rely heavily on State and local resources for recovery.

RESOURCE

FEMA provides this digital resource library, including independent learning tools, fact sheets, and webinars to support state, local, tribal, and territorial governments and others with federal grants management responsibilities.

To ensure the sustainability of mitigation and home repair programs, local governments should identify potential funding sources or establish dedicated funding mechanisms for housing and mitigation assistance. Depending upon the scale of the disaster, funding may be available from federal or state sources. Local governments can work with the Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA) to apply for, or secure competitive federal funding opportunities related to disaster preparedness, mitigation, or resilience. State agencies will also work with local and county governments to identify and distribute funding or other resources at the state level for preparedness or post-disaster housing recovery.

Some municipalities may consider creating dedicated local resilience funds supported by local tax revenues, impact fees, or other available funding mechanisms. The development of a dedicated local fund for housing recovery and resilience will require significant administrative and operational resources; given that, the municipality should first assess its capacity and ability to manage and coordinate recovery funds. Further, municipalities with dedicated funding sources should establish benchmarks and performance indicators to track program effectiveness and conduct periodic reviews to improve program design and delivery.

Even without a dedicated local funding mechanism, specific organizational and collaborative capacity can be built to enable more effective disaster management. Local governments will need to assess their capacity to receive and administer mitigation and/or disaster recovery grants and identify potential programs or strategies for implementation. In the case of a presidential disaster declaration and allocation of Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), there may be an opportunity to expand or update existing housing programs to address unmet housing needs and better prepare communities for future disasters.

TENANT PROTECTIONS

Develop post-disaster tenant protections

The availability and geographic distribution of owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing in an area can strongly influence who is affected by a disaster and to what extent. Renters tend to experience more social and physical vulnerability and more housing instability than owners.[8] Disasters can exacerbate this divide, and those with greater vulnerability are more likely to be displaced following a disaster.[9] Owners tend to have more financial resources, legal protections, and buffers from price increases than renters, enabling them to recover quickly.[10] Rental housing also tends to be older and less well maintained than owner-occupied housing, increasing the risk of damage from a disaster. Beyond physical damage to rental housing, renters may face eviction after a disaster due to lost wages from economic disruption or an increase in rental prices due to reduced housing supply.

State laws create guidelines about rental prices, habitability, and set the conditions under which an eviction can occur. Delaware has tenant protections in place related to source of income, habitability standards, right to counsel, anti-retaliation, and increased tenant representation in eviction proceedings.[11] Tenant protections can be passed at the local level to guarantee protections during tenancy and during the eviction process. Tenant protections can be legislative, such as a rent control ordinance or a temporary moratorium on evictions after a disaster, or administrative, such as providing technical assistance to renters in understanding their rights in the event of property damage or assisting renters with accessing available financial support during recovery. There may be existing legal support

DATA/TOOL

The State and Local Tenant Protections Database provides information about protections passed or implemented that have assisted in preventing evictions and keeping renters stably housed. The database tracks state and local tenant protections such as right to counsel, source-of-income discrimination, anti-rent gouging measures, and just cause eviction laws.

[8] Lee, J. Y., & Van Zandt, S. (2019). Housing Tenure and Social Vulnerability to Disasters: A Review of the Evidence. Journal of Planning Literature, 34(2), 156-170. https://doi.org/10.1177/0885412218812080.

[9] Myers, C. A., Slack, T., & Singelmann, J. (2008). Social vulnerability and migration in the wake of disaster: The case of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. *Population and Environment: A Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies, 29*(6), 271–291. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11111-008-0072-y.

[10] Raymond, E. L., Green, T., & Kaminski, M. (2021). Preventing Evictions After Disasters: The Role of Landlord-Tenant Law. *Housing Policy Debate*, *32*(1), 35–51. https://doi.org/10.1080/10511482.2021.1931929.

[11] National Low Income Housing Coalition. Tenant Protections Database. Available at: https://nlihc.org/tenant-protections.

services or organizations such as Legal Aid in your community that can provide assistance post disaster. Municipalities should understand the extent of support available to renters and any anticipated gaps in support post-disaster.

RESOURCES

Resource	Resource Type	Description
A Guide to Proactive Rental Inspection Programs, ChangeLab Solutions	Research, report, or other guidance	This guide provides an overview of proactive rental inspection (PRI) programs, which inspect rental units on a periodic basis, rather than in response to a complaint, to ensure that covered units are safe and habitable. The guide includes an overview of program design and components, program advantages, potential challenges, and strategies for successful adoption.
Case Study: Leveraging Financial Resources, FEMA	Case study	In 2013, major flooding in the small town of Lyons, CO caused significant damage and business interruptions. Lyons officials were unfamiliar with federal disaster recovery requirements and faced challenges complying with federal procurement rules. Assistance from the State provided additional capacity to the small town and enabled them to fund staff and temporary office space during recovery, allowing them to successfully apply for and receive several federal and state grant awards to aid in recovery.
CDBG-DR Toolkit: Capacity, HUD	Data or tool	This HUD toolkit provides tools to assess local capacity and build a team for CDBG-DR management and delivery.
Community Adaptation Program, New Orleans Redevelopment Authority	Case study	The New Orleans Redevelopment Authority (NORA) implemented residential stormwater management improvements to owner-occupied homes using funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) National Disaster Resilience Competition grant.
Creating and Managing Rental Registries, National League of Cities	Case study	This article provides a series of case studies focused on creating and managing rental registries at the local level.
Evaluating Equity Efforts and Outcomes of CDBG-DR Funded Flood Resilience Efforts in Four Communities, HUD	Research, report, or other guidance	A 2022 study prepared for HUD evaluated CDBG-DR efforts of flood resilience efforts in four communities. It found that grantees had difficulty understanding the relationships and distinctions between the various federal disaster recovery funding sources early in the planning process. Difference in program applications, requirements, eligible funding uses, and reporting added complexity. When grantees were able to collaborate with federal agencies, they reported better outcomes in terms of timing, efficacy, and equity.

Resource	Resource Type	Description
Filling the Gap: Recommendations for the Establishment of a State Disaster Relief Fund, Maryland DEM	Research, report, or other guidance	The Maryland State Disaster Relief Fund Workgroup developed this report to make recommendations regarding the efficacy and efficiency of the State's disaster relief funding capability.
Grants Management Technical Assistance, FEMA	Research, report, or other guidance	FEMA provides this digital resource library, including independent learning tools, fact sheets, and webinars to support state, local, tribal, and territorial governments and others with federal grants management responsibilities.
Housing Recovery and CDBG-DR, HUD	Research, report, or other guidance	This study, commissioned by HUD, examines timing of CDBG-DR funding and program delivery and provides guidance to support grantees in reducing potential lags and improving program launch based on likely contributing factors.
Investing in the Vitality of Detroit's Neighborhoods Through Improved Rental Regulation, Center for Community Progress	Case study	The city of Detroit enacted a rental registry ordinance in 2017 to bring all properties up to code. It requires landlords to register their properties and pass regular inspections to obtain and retain a Certificate of Compliance to legally rent the property. However, fewer than 20% of rental properties are currently registered. An evaluation of the program found that costs needed to bring a property into compliance were not feasible for landlords and that violation tickets were easy to ignore. The evaluation recommends changes to the program, including reducing the complexity of the program and increasing engagement with tenants and landlords.
Learning from Emergency Rental Assistance Programs: Lessons from Fifteen Case Studies. Housing Initiative at Penn, National Low Income Housing Coalition, and NYU Furman Center	Research, report, or other guidance	This report examines fifteen rental assistance programs funded by the U.S. Department of Treasury Emergency Rental assistance program during the COVID-19 pandemic. These case studies of small, large, rural, and urban jurisdictions provide a snapshot of successes and challenges with the implementation of emergency rental assistance.
Mapping Neighborhoods with the Highest Risk of Housing Instability and Homelessness, The Urban Institute	Data or tool	The Urban Institute has created a mapping tool to visualize neighborhoods with the highest risk of housing instability and homelessness. This can help local decisionmakers identify neighborhoods with the greatest need for rental assistance.

Resource	Resource Type	Description
Preventing Evictions After Disasters: The Role of Landlord-Tenant Law	Research, report, or other guidance	This study examines how protections for landlords and tenants in state law influence evictions during disaster recovery periods in four states. In states with strong tenant protections, there is no statistically significant rise in evictions following disaster.
Raising the Bar: Linking Landlord Incentives and Regulation Through Rental Licensing – A Short Guide for Local Officials, Center for Community Progress	Research, report, or other guidance	This report provides guidance on landlord licensing, improving the quality of rental management, and offering incentives to responsible landlords.[12]
Reallocating Funding to Achieve Recovery Goals, FEMA	Case study	Following a string of severe tornadoes in 2012 that did not meet Presidential disaster declaration requirements for federal funding, the State of Illinois was able to re-prioritize existing state and federal funding and resources, including technical assistance and blue sky programs, to meet the recovery needs of communities.
State and Local Innovation: Tenant Protections Database, National Low Income Housing Coalition	Data or tool	The State and Local Tenant Protections Database provides information about protections passed or implemented that have assisted in preventing evictions and keeping renters stably housed. The database tracks state and local tenant protections passed since the onset of COVID-19 as well as specific tenant protections that were in place prior to 2021, such as right to counsel, source-of-income discrimination, eviction record sealing and expungement legislation, anti-rent gouging measures, and just cause eviction laws.[13]
State Disaster Recovery Fund, Maryland General Assembly	Template	Recommended by a State Disaster Relief Fund Workgroup, in 2023 the State of Maryland established a State Disaster Recovery Fund, appropriated in the state budget, to provide disaster recovery assistance to local governments for individuals and families, public facilities, businesses, and nonprofits. The Fund may be used only if the Governor

[12] Center for Community Progress. (2015). Raising the Bar: Linking Landlord Incentives and Regulation through Rental Licensing – A Short Guide for Local Officials. Available at: https://communityprogress.org/publications/raising-the-bar/.

[13] National Low Income Housing Coalition. Tenant Protections Database. Available at: https://nlihc.org/tenant-protections.

Resource	Resource Type	Description
		has declared a State of Emergency or a local emergency management organization requests assistance.
The Challenge of Financial Recovery from Disasters: The Case of Florida Homeowners After Hurricane Michael, Resilience Action Fund	Case study	This research examines the costs and cost types associated with Hurricane Michael in Florida in 2018. Costs extend beyond physical housing damage, including evacuation, temporary housing, and surges in services. Lower income households experienced greater financial burden after the disaster.
Using federal recovery funding to build local capacity, ICF	Research, report, or other guidance	This guide discusses how CDBG-DR grantees and subrecipients can build local capacity and enhance the effectiveness of their recovery.

PARTNERS

- Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA)
- Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC)
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)
- Delaware Sea Grant
- Delaware Manufactured Homeowners Association (DMHOA)
- Energize Delaware
- First State Community Action Agency (FSCAA)
- Habitat for Humanity
- Housing Alliance Delaware
- Local Public Housing Authorities (PHAs)
- Milford Housing Development Corporation (MHDC)
- University of Delaware (UDel)

Community Engagement

IN THIS SECTION

Community engagement is essential for local governments to effectively prepare for and recover from disasters, particularly in terms of housing. Engaging with residents, neighborhood organizations, and community groups helps identify the unique needs and vulnerabilities of different populations, ensuring that disaster housing plans are inclusive and responsive. By fostering open communication, local governments can build trust, encourage collaboration, and ensure that recovery efforts address the specific needs of the community, leading to more resilient and sustainable housing solutions in the aftermath of a disaster.

- ●○○ Partner with local non-profits, neighborhood associations, or other local partners to share information and resources
- ●●○ Host community workshops or public meetings on disaster preparedness, housing recovery, and mitigation strategies
- ●●○ Develop and distribute brochures, newsletters, and social media content on disaster risks and available housing resources
- ●●● Offer GIS hazard mapping online for residents
- ●●● Conduct resident survey of disaster housing preparedness, mitigation, and priority concerns
- ●●● Develop a community advisory board to provide input on disaster housing recovery plans and policies

Resources: Templates, tools, and other resources to guide action development and implementation

Partners: Federal, state, local, and community partners involved in the development of the Disaster Housing Strategy that can provide support or guidance

PARTNER NETWORK

Partner with local non-profits, neighborhood associations, or other local partners to share information and resources

Coordination with local community organizations, neighborhood associations, and other partners is crucial to sharing preparedness and recovery information widely among communities, particularly when working in hard-to-reach communities or communities in which trust in local government has been damaged. Non-profits and other community groups specializing in disaster housing preparedness can assist in hosting workshops, distributing informational materials, and providing low-income homeowners with resources for making their homes more resilient. By working closely with neighborhood associations, municipalities can tailor outreach efforts to address the specific needs of different communities, ensuring that all residents have access to the tools necessary for a more resilient recovery.

After a disaster, local partners play a key role in identifying vulnerable populations—such as seniors, low-income families, or renters—who may need additional support navigating insurance claims, applying for financial assistance, or securing safe housing. Non-profits and community organizations can help municipalities coordinate interim and permanent housing solutions and connect residents with assistance programs for repair and rebuilding. By leveraging these networks, municipalities can enhance communication and resource distribution, ensuring recovery efforts reach those most in need.

Long-term housing recovery requires ongoing collaboration between municipalities and community organizations to ensure sustainable rebuilding efforts. Partnering with local non-profits that specialize in affordable housing can help municipalities promote resilient and equitable redevelopment, preventing displacement and ensuring that homes meet the needs of the community. Additionally, neighborhood associations can provide valuable input on local housing needs and advocate for policies that prioritize community-led recovery initiatives.

RESOURCE

This HUD toolkit, Community Engagement: Building Purpose and Participation, offers people-centered strategies and a roadmap for community needs, ideas, and visions to inform public investments. It provides a pathway for users to initiative, carry out, and evaluation a community engagement strategy.

COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

Host community workshops or public meetings on disaster preparedness, housing recovery, and mitigation strategies

A key element of preparedness, beyond mitigation of physical infrastructure, is equipping residents with the knowledge and resources needed to navigate disasters effectively and take steps to increase their housing resilience. Hosting community workshops or public meetings on these topics allows local officials, housing experts, and local housing organizations and agencies to educate residents on strategies for protecting their homes against future hazards. These sessions can cover topics such as fortifying structures against extreme weather, elevating homes in flood-prone areas, and utilizing fire-resistant materials in construction. By providing residents with practical guidance on mitigation measures and home retrofitting, municipalities can help ensure that communities are better prepared to recover from disasters and reduce long-term housing vulnerabilities.

RESOURCE

This briefing paper from the American Planning Association, Public Engagement in Recovery Planning, outlines how local government staff and officials should design public engagement processes, identify shared interests, and keep participants up-to-date on the status of implementation.

Many residents struggle with navigating the complex recovery process, including insurance claims, financial assistance, and rebuilding regulations in the aftermath of a disaster. Public meetings can serve as a critical resource, offering step-by-step guidance on accessing state and federal aid programs, understanding rebuilding processes, and working with contractors. Municipalities can collaborate with housing agencies, legal aid organizations, and non-profits to provide expert advice and connect residents with support networks. These forums also give community members an opportunity to voice their concerns, share experiences, and advocate for policies that address their specific recovery needs.

Long-term housing resilience requires active planning and community engagement. By integrating resilience strategies into public discussions, municipalities can encourage residents to participate in broader policy efforts, such as advocating for resilient zoning laws or investing in sustainable housing initiatives. Workshops can highlight the importance of an affordable, diverse housing stock, ensuring that recovery efforts prioritize equity and accessibility. Through consistent outreach and education, municipalities can empower residents to take an active role in rebuilding stronger, more resilient communities.

PUBLIC CONTENT AND MATERIALS

Develop and distribute brochures, newsletters, and social media content on disaster risks and available housing resources

Local municipalities can enhance housing resilience and recovery by developing and distributing clear, accessible informational materials on disaster risks and available housing resources. Before a disaster, brochures and newsletters can educate residents on how to strengthen their homes against potential hazards, such as reinforcing roofs for hurricane resistance or elevating structures in flood-prone areas. These materials can outline steps for securing home insurance, accessing financial assistance for mitigation upgrades, and understanding local building codes. This information should be shared in a variety of formats including print and digital to ensure that all residents, including those with limited internet access, have access to accurate, up-to-date information and support.

Following a disaster, municipalities can use newsletters, brochures, and social media to keep residents informed about recovery resources and rebuilding assistance. Timely updates on available grants, temporary housing programs, and rebuilding permit requirements can help streamline the recovery process. Social media platforms provide a powerful tool for reaching a broad audience quickly, allowing municipalities to share real-time updates on relief efforts, housing assistance deadlines, and frequently asked questions about disaster recovery. Ongoing engagement through multiple communication channels also fosters a sense of community resilience and preparedness for future disasters. By regularly publishing success stories of homeowners who have rebuilt stronger, municipalities can encourage others to adopt resilient housing strategies. Additionally, interactive social media campaigns—such as live Q&A sessions with housing experts or community forums—can provide residents with direct access to valuable guidance.

DATA/TOOL

Municipalities can lean on existing public data sources, such as FEMA's National Risk Index, to understand the risk to their communities and communicate that risk to residents.

GIS MAPPING

Offer GIS hazard mapping online for residents

One of the most challenging aspects of disaster recovery is ensuring residents have access to accurate, up-to-date information and data. Local municipalities can take steps in the preparedness phase to increase transparency around hazard risk and efforts that communities are taking to increase their resilience to hazards.

Local municipalities can increase public access to information by offering Geographic Information System (GIS) hazard mapping online, providing residents with critical insights into disaster risks before and after an event. By making hazard maps accessible, municipalities can help homeowners and renters understand their vulnerability to floods, wildfires, and other hazards. Pre-disaster, these tools can guide residents in making informed decisions about home improvements, such as elevating or floodproofing structures in high-risk areas. Municipalities can also integrate zoning regulations, evacuation routes, and emergency services locations into the mapping system, ensuring that residents have the necessary information to prepare their homes and families for potential disasters.

After a disaster, online tools can link residents to key recovery resources, such as temporary housing locations, rebuilding permit requirements, and available financial assistance programs. Incorporating mitigation strategies into GIS hazard mapping can help residents make informed decisions about rebuilding stronger and safer. Maps can highlight areas where resilient construction techniques are recommended or required based on historical damage patterns. Data collection and analysis can assist local governments in decision-making too. Local governments can use geographic data to track rebuilding progress and identify communities that may need additional support in long-term recovery planning. By visualizing the extent of destruction and prioritizing high-risk areas, municipalities can streamline recovery efforts and ensure that resources are distributed efficiently to those in need.

CASE STUDY

During the development of its 2023 Climate Action Plan, the City of Falmouth, ME used a map-based application to enable the community to provide comments, place them on the map, and upvote user-submitted ideas. This helped the local government centralize and crowdsource information and facilitate community engagement throughout the process.

RESIDENT SURVEY

Conduct resident survey of disaster housing preparedness, mitigation, and priority concerns

Before a municipality begins implementing programs or policies to address disaster housing recovery, it may be helpful to start with collecting data to understand the community's current housing needs, priorities, and gaps. Communities that have an affordable, accessible, and quality housing stock prior to a disaster will be better positioned post-disaster than those communities starting with housing shortages and high housing costs. Municipalities in the preparedness phase should address and prepare for disaster housing needs and aim to address housing concerns during blue skies, like ensuring communities have adequate and safe housing options. A community survey can help identify priority housing concerns, needs, and strengths.

Community surveys can also help to gauge general community knowledge of disaster housing risks and property-level preparedness. Community surveys can help local governments understand how well residents are prepared for housing-related risks, such as flooding or hurricanes. Questions can focus on home retrofitting efforts, insurance coverage, and residents' awareness of local building codes and emergency housing resources. This allows municipalities to identify gaps in knowledge and resources, tailor outreach efforts, provide targeted assistance, and develop policies that better support housing resilience in vulnerable communities. After a disaster, resident surveys become essential tools for evaluating the effectiveness of recovery efforts and identifying the most urgent housing needs. Surveys can collect feedback on challenges residents face in accessing temporary housing, navigating insurance claims, or securing financial assistance for rebuilding. Additionally, surveys can help identify patterns of displacement or housing instability, allowing local governments to implement policies that promote equitable and sustainable rebuilding efforts. These efforts can help increase trust in local government, provide transparency, and ensure efforts are aligned with community priorities.

COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD

Develop a community advisory board to provide input on disaster housing recovery plans and policies

Municipalities can strengthen their disaster housing recovery efforts by enabling residents to act as partners in decision making, especially when prioritizing strategies important to community members. One way to engage residents is through the establishment of a community advisory board composed of diverse stakeholders, including residents, housing advocates, emergency management and housing officials, and representatives from nonprofit and faith-based organizations. This board should be engaged in the planning process before a disaster occurs, helping to identify potential housing vulnerabilities, prioritize resources, and ensure that recovery plans address the needs of all community members, particularly those in historically underserved areas. The board can also assist in designing and implementing strategies for public outreach and education around disaster housing preparedness, ensuring that residents understand their properties' risks and available resources in case of displacement or damaged housing.

Following a disaster, the community advisory board can serve as a bridge between local government and the community, ensuring that recovery programs are implemented fairly and efficiently. The board can help with community outreach, advocate for transparent decision-making, and identify gaps in housing assistance that may leave vulnerable populations at risk of prolonged displacement. Further, the board may gather feedback from affected residents to evaluate the effectiveness of recovery strategies, allowing municipalities to improve their disaster housing recovery strategies and build a more resilient community.

RESOURCES

Resource	Resource Type	Description
Best Practices for Regional Planning Coordination, The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development	Research, report, or other guidance	This document provides guidance for municipalities or counties interested in working on regional planning initiatives. It provides an overview of best practices across land use, transportation, and economic development and action steps to successfully creating a regional plan.
Building Partnerships: A Best Practices Guide, USDA	Research, report, or other guidance	This guide from the federal government aims to help departments and agencies expand their use of partnerships. It offers insights and common practices related to building effective partnerships, when to collaborate, and keys to success.
Coordination & Partnerships Awareness Guide, U.S. Department of Homeland Security	Research, report, or other guidance	This guide discusses how to address partnership and coordination across jurisdictions, particularly among those in the emergency response community.
Falmouth, ME 2023 Climate Action Plan Map Application	Case study	During the development of its 2023 Climate Action Plan, the City of Falmouth, ME used a map-based application to enable the community to provide comments, place them on the map, and upvote user-submitted ideas. This helped the local government centralize and crowdsource information and facilitate community engagement throughout the process.
Lessons in Regional Resilience: Case Studies on Regional Climate Collaboratives, Georgetown Climate Center	Case study	The Georgetown Climate Center worked with local leaders in six regions to understand the role of regional collaboratives to coordinate climate change initiatives. A key role that regional collaboratives play is providing a forum for convening key decision makers and other stakeholders in a region. Collaboratives also create plans, participate in outreach efforts, and assist with communication across vertical levels of government (local, state, federal).
Public Engagement in Recovery Planning, American Planning Association	Research, report, or other guidance	This briefing paper from the American Planning Association, Public Engagement in Recovery Planning, outlines how local government staff and officials should design public engagement processes, identify shared interests, and keep participants up to date on the status of implementation.

PARTNERS

- Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA)
- Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA)
- Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS)
- Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC)
- Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- Delaware League of Local Governments (DLLG)
- Delaware Sea Grant
- Delaware Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (DEVOAD)
- Eleventh Street Bridge Long-Term Recovery Group (ESBLTRG)
- Energize Delaware
- First State Community Action Agency (FSCAA)
- Habitat for Humanity
- Housing Alliance Delaware
- Milford Housing Development Corporation (MHDC)
- Red Cross (ARC)
- United Way
- University of Delaware (UDel)