SAMPLE

COMMUNITY BASED DISASTER PLAN

South County Community Disaster Response Team

115 Second Street, Watsonville, California 95076
I. Short-Term Recovery and Emergency Response: Critical Issues

A. Conditions
   1. Panic retreat: the instant time stops
   2. Lack of access
      a. Severely damaged buildings
      b. Access restrictions to larger area
   3. Loss of control: government intercedes
   4. Exposure / Vulnerability
      a. Dependence on government to provide security
      b. Government holds decision authority re: access (e.g., ability to survive)
   5. Out of business
      a. Potential loss/unavailability of records, inventory, place of work
   6. Lack of information
      a. Normal channels of communication disrupted (physical/political)
      b. New locus of government authority (emergency operation and powers)
      c. Lack of clarity as to how to communicate with authorities or where authority lies
   7. Continually changing conditions
      a. Aftershocks: the earthquake never quite stops
      b. Governmental policies, actions, and priorities shift as conditions change

B. Business Needs
   1. Limited access to buildings (business records, personal, financial)
   2. Extended access to buildings for inventory removal
3. Access to policy making process and policy makers in emergency setting
4. Information regarding above
5. Communication channels with government
   a. Formal representation (business association)
   b. Individual representation (inform government of small merchants’ personal plights)
   c. Discussion of potential remedies
   d. Provide information needed by government
   e. Receive status information from government
6. Communication between property owner / merchant
7. Communication with employees
8. Temporary business services
9. Temporary business space
10. Individual aid and assistance (inventory recovery, credit, etc.)
11. Information about building conditions
12. Mutual learning: expressing and understanding of public and private sector perspectives during emergency period

C. Issues
1. Public safety values and actions (no access, immediate demolition) vs. other values (business survival needs: access, delay, acceptance of risk)
2. Fairness vs. unique circumstances in granting access requests
3. Acceptable levels of risk (public and private); liability
4. How to link public and private sector in response partnership:
   a. Establish common purpose and goals
   b. Provide volunteer support
   c. Establish procedures to resolve problems
   d. Vest decision authority where it can incorporate business concerns (e.g., permeability of Incident Command System)
e. Co-mingle resources to administer resources and meet needs
f. Apply correct personnel and skills to tasks at hand

5. When to act, when to wait (is information sufficient or forthcoming?)

D. Actions (Santa Cruz Case Study)

1. Government:
   a. Establish new administrative capacity augmenting emergency staff with additional volunteer and governmental resources
   b. Modify (open) Incident Command System to establish working partnership with private sector in order to balance safety with other values
   c. Make and carry out action plans for major activities (e.g., inventory removal) involving client groups in all phases of planning and implementation
   d. Address communication problems; augment public information activity by linking with private sector resources

2. Private sector:
   a. Make resources (information, personnel, equipment, etc.) available to government
   b. Engage in dialogue with government regarding business needs and their resolution: press for action; educate and convey values and issues
   c. Establish clearinghouse for all business concerns using organizational resources (Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Association)
   d. Begin dialogue on reconstruction and recovery issues
   e. Tap external resources (e.g., International Downtown Association)
   f. Ensure key people (capable, forceful, representative) participate in planning and implementing response activities with government emergency personnel
g. Plan for temporary business locations and organize resources to accomplish relocation

h. Have in place administrative capacity to receive cash and other donations of aid (e.g., 501(c)(3) non-profit organization)

i. Link with other organizations to create entity to construct and manage temporary quarters (Santa Cruz “troika” of non-profits: Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Association, Cultural Council combined to form “Phoenix Partnership” establishing creditworthiness, administrative capacity, etc.)

II. Long-Term Business Recovery Issues: Critical Issues

A. Economic issues

1. New economic calculation: How to increase business activity in devastated area to support costs of new construction. (Heaviest damage may be in areas of marginal economic vitality; or earthquake may accelerate declining trend common to older downtowns.)

2. Whether to transform or simply rebuild, taking into account market potentials

3. Adjusting to the business cycle: recession or growth economy; local economy variations; availability of capital

4. How to maintain business viability until reconstruction (minimize loss of merchants, maintain market share, shopping patterns and customer base)

5. How to re-plan physically and aesthetically to support a retail environment

B. Political issues

1. Orchestrating a public-private partnership that mutually supports rebuilding. (Defining roles and relationships between government and business sector; vesting power and authority regarding reconstruction issues.)

2. Creating new resources to finance recovery (e.g., local sales tax measure)

3. Defining a future that works economically yet retains desired qualities and characteristics of the past
4. Involving the community in planning efforts; dealing with misconceptions about development economics

5. Organizing new political interests with focus on economic and rebuilding concerns

6. Time pressures:
   a. Needing to move quickly may force political decisions to “ripen” prematurely and therefore with more political difficulty
   b. Desire to expedite early approval of reconstruction projects could preclude important development opportunities

C. Governmental issues

1. What is the capacity of government to undertake major planning and rebuilding? What should be done? How should the planning effort be organized?

2. Institutional culture: How was bureaucracy oriented pre-quake? (strong and weak areas; relationship to business interests; reactive or proactive in philosophy and approach)

3. Potential need to address long-standing problems such as infrastructure capacity and quality in order to support rebuilding

4. Local fiscal situation: how to maintain service levels and shift priorities to undertake rebuilding; limits and constraints

5. How to establish or activate recovery tools (e.g., redevelopment districts)

6. How to accept and solicit offers of assistance (importance of having a quasi-public non-profit 501(c)(3) in place)

III. Business Recovery Lessons of Loma Prieta

A. Emergency response and short-term recovery

1. Success (survival) depends on ability of government and business sector to engage in a response partnership.

2. A multitude of needs emerge. Resources are available, but must be coordinated and directed.
B. Long-term recovery

1. Success depends on ability to convert disaster into opportunity and in so doing, overcome economic, political and social barriers to change.

2. You can’t put it back the way it was. This fact affects everything (timing, phases, nature of the recovery plan, citizen involvement, politics, economics). It gets complicated.

IV. Planning for Response and Recovery: How Preparedness and Practices Should Change as a Result of the Loma Prieta Earthquake (Post-Earthquake Research)

A. Business should:

1. Understand response plans and likely actions of government (as well as governmental perspectives)

2. Participate in pre-event planning to establish basis for response partnership.

3. Identify and develop resources (database, 501(c)(3) entities) to make available to government and businesses during crisis response.

4. Imagine scenarios based on local conditions (e.g., concentrations of unreinforced masonry buildings, organizational resources, etc.)

5. Educate and prepare businesses for individual survival.

6. Understand long-term recovery opportunities, obstacles and issues in advance of earthquake.


B. Government should:

1. Involve businesses in the preparation and review of all phases of response planning.

2. Create response plans that specifically address business needs.

3. Understand the phases and transitions of emergency response and the organization and operational implications.

4. Understand that recovery and response activities are strongly linked.

5. Consider and include dimensions of response and recovery partnership in pre-event planning.