



Resilient County and Local Planning Boards

2020 MPCA Conference

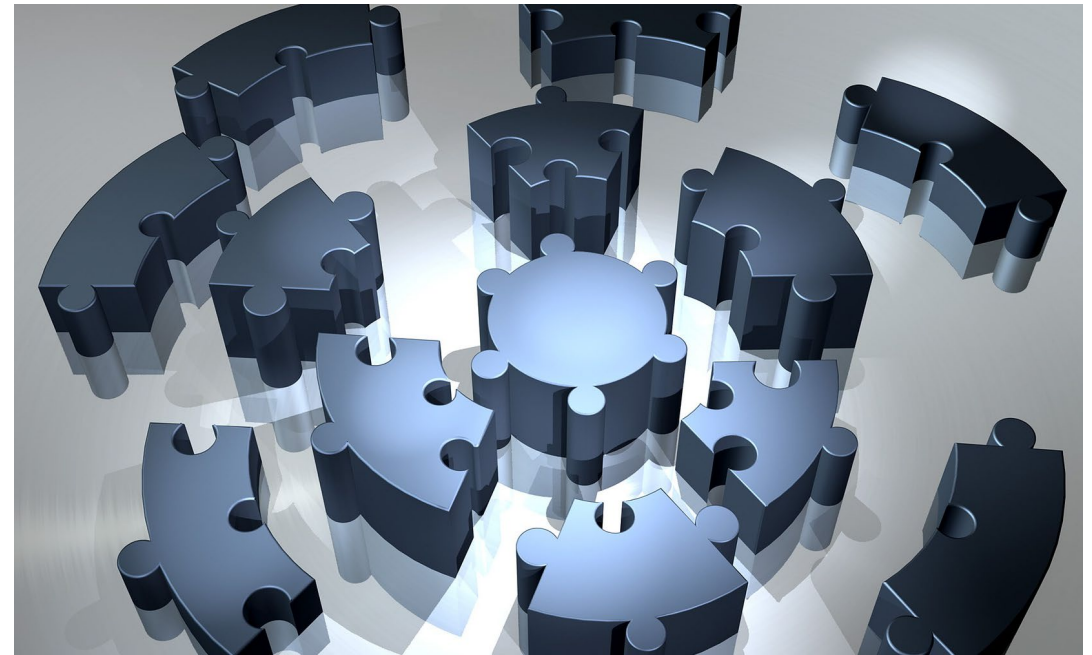
Vision Planning and Consulting



November 9, 2020

Agenda

1. Planning Board's Roles and Responsibilities for Continuity Planning
2. Plan Integration and Why
3. Planning efforts in light of COVID-19



Planning Board - Current Role

Functions:

- Planning, policy-making (legislative function)
- Regulation, development review (quasi-judicial function).

Duties:

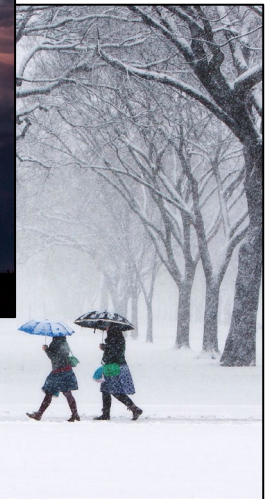
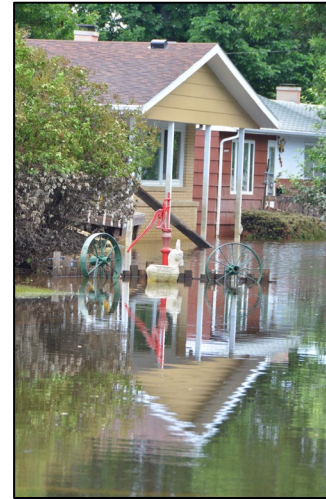
- Drafting comprehensive plan, issuing zoning ordinances, reviewing subdivision plans.
- Making recommendations to elected officials on proposed planning changes.



Planning Board - Role during Disasters

- Ensuring public health and safety, continued economic activity, community activities, etc.
- To hear out community members and let them voice their concerns.

A disaster that affects a part of the community should not halt the functioning of Planning Boards.



Challenges

- A plethora of plans
- Absence of a collaborative process
- Lack of understanding of the spatial effects of policy

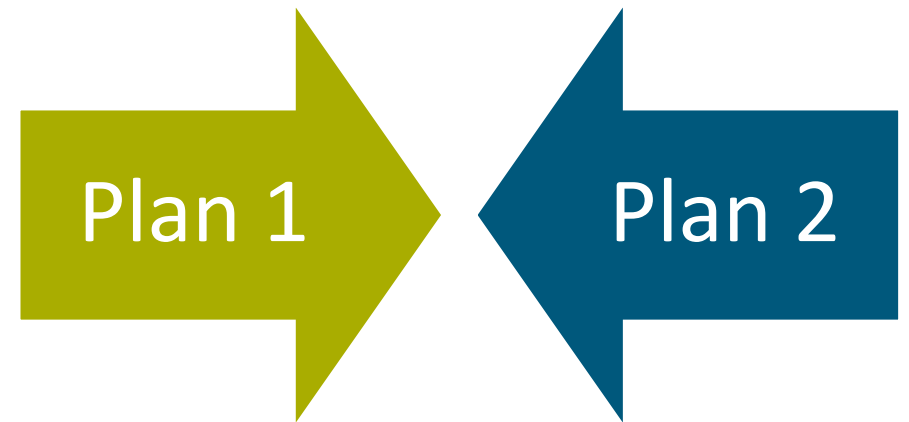
So, how do communities proceed?

Begin by Integrated Planning Efforts

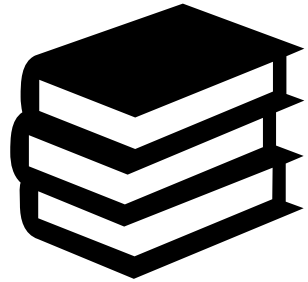
Plan	Department
Comprehensive Plan	Planning Department
Zoning Ordinance	Planning Department
Stormwater Management Plan	Planning Department
Economic Development Plan	Planning Department
Hazard Mitigation Plan	Office of Emergency Management
Historic District Plan	Planning Department
Disaster Recovery Plan	Office of Emergency Management
Transportation Plan	Transportation Department
District Improvement Plan	Office of Emergency Management

Integrated Planning

- A **two-way information exchange** between hazard mitigation/resiliency plans and other community plans.
- **Blending** the community's plans, policies, codes and programs that guide development and the **roles of people and government** in Implementation.
- Integrate plans specific to the community hazards and address **vulnerability of the built environment** to those hazards.

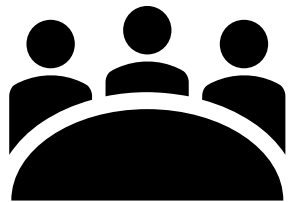


Two ways to accomplish Plan Integration



Integration into local planning mechanisms:

- Integrate **natural hazard information** and mitigation principles into local planning mechanisms and vice versa.



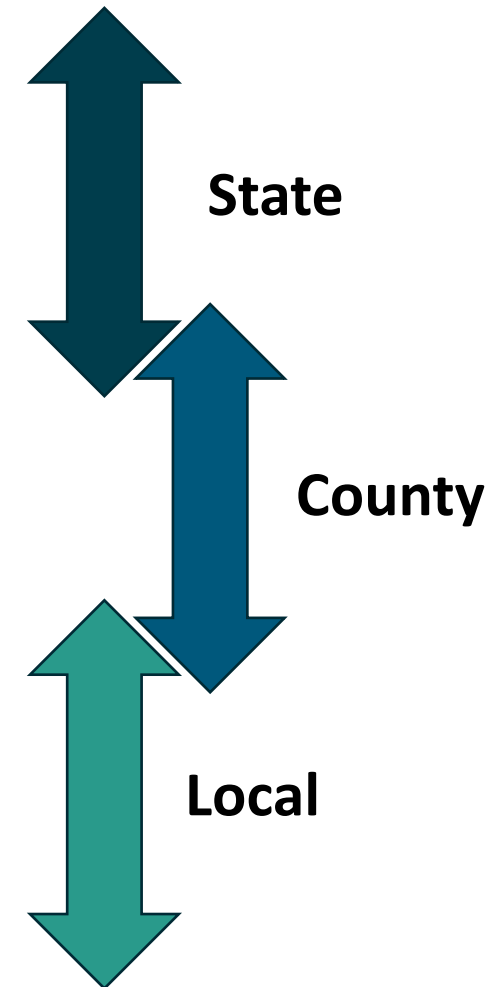
Integration between departments:

- Encourage **collaborative planning**, and inter-agency coordination.

Vertical Plan Integration

Vertical Integration:

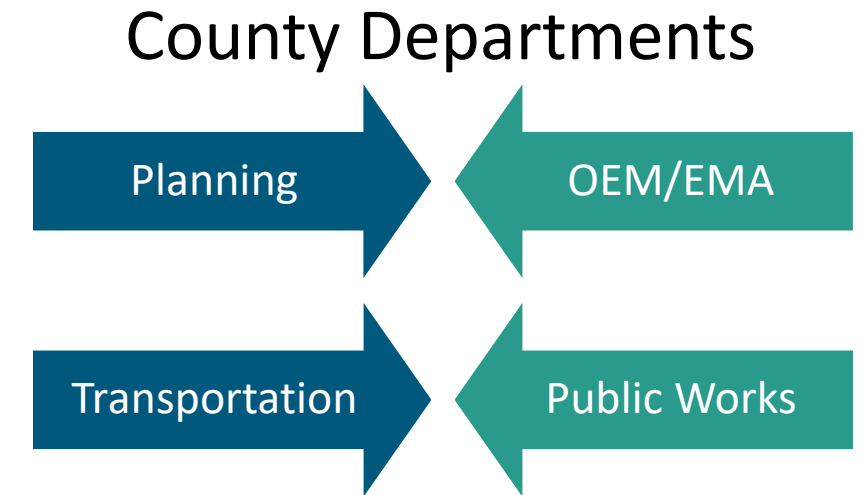
- Aims to ensure that planning at the national, state, and local levels are mutually supportive.
- Promotes dialogue among actors at different levels throughout the process.
- Encourages integration of agencies or departments across local, county, state, and federal levels.



Horizontal Plan Integration

Horizontal Integration:

- Integrates agencies or departments at a single level - federal, state, county or local.
- Brings together the efforts of groups that are bound by mutual interests.
- Coordinates operations across a jurisdiction or among partner jurisdictions.
- Fosters cooperation and teamwork.



Who should be Involved?

Regional Entities and State Agencies

- Emergency management
- Transportation
- Public works
- Planning
- Environmental services

Representatives from county departments

- Emergency management
- Transportation
- Public works
- Planning
- Environmental services
- Public information

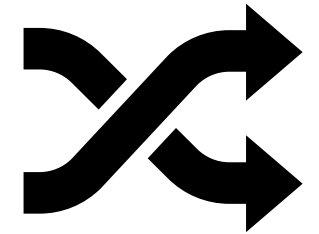
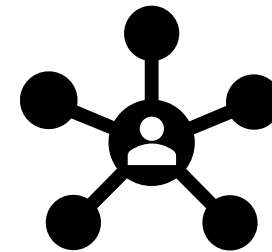
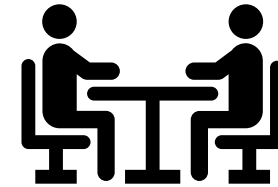
Representatives from municipalities

- Town/Borough Manager
- Secretary
- Council member

Integrated Planning – During Quiet Times

Integration enhances risk reduction by:

- Developing recommendations for integration into community-wide plans.
- Compiling plan measures to demonstrate that policies are in harmony rather than contradicting each other.
- Improving inter-departmental communication and coordination.



Integrated Planning – During Disasters

- Reduces a community's vulnerability to disasters.
- Supports effective pre- and post-disaster decision making.
- Strengthens the comprehensive planning process and natural hazard mitigation strategy.
- Speeds up the return to normalcy following a hazard event.
- Reduces chances of gaps in provision of relief.



Hazard Mitigation/Risk Reduction Objectives

Future Land Use Plan

- Incorporate growth management techniques - buffering
- Cluster development outside high hazard areas

Revitalization Plan

- Retrofit structures with deficiencies to ensure structural integrity
- Relocate outside hazard areas to maintain continuance of local services

Housing Strategy

- Create programs to retrofit publicly subsidized affordable housing to reduce damage after a disaster



Hazard Mitigation/Risk Reduction Objectives

Environmental Resources Plan

- Restore/protect natural resources (wetlands), that buffer & help absorb the impacts of floodwaters

Long Range Transportation/Infrastructure Plan

- Analyze adequacy of existing & projected infrastructure system to evacuate populations prior

Historic Preservation Plan

- Establish performance standards for redevelopment and sensitive reuse of historic resources



Hazard Mitigation/Risk Reduction Objectives

Capital Improvement Plan

- Incorporate HM through hazard specific expenditures (strengthen at-risk facilities – schools, hospitals, fire stations)

Zoning Ordinance

- Limit density of development in the floodplain

Subdivision Ordinance

- Review placement of roads, residential lots, public facilities within subdivisions that can increase natural hazard risks (evacuation/access)

Building Code

- Specify design construction standards for resistance to stress or hazards and protect new construction





Planning Resilient Communities

FEMA's process for resilient communities through integration:

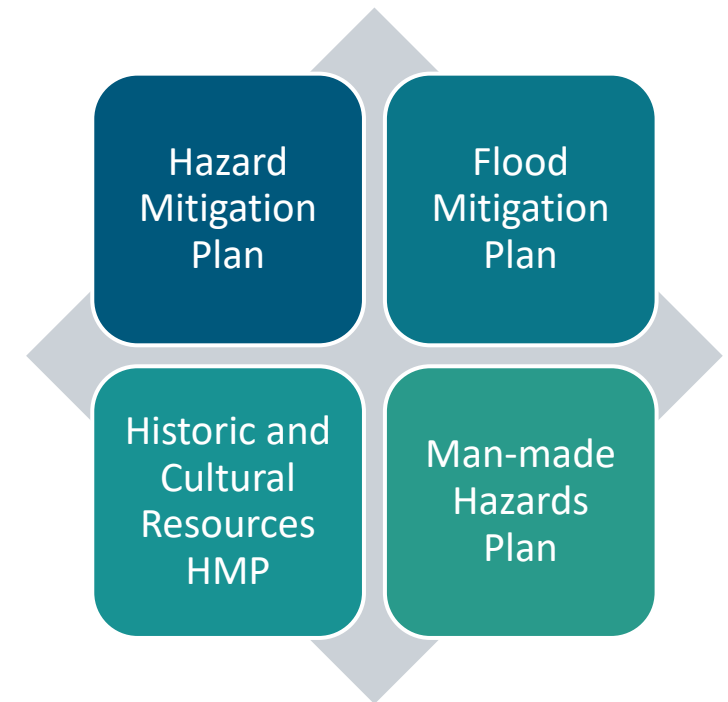
1. Assess planning framework through a resilience lens.
2. Identify, inform, and engage local leadership, staff, and stakeholders.
3. Establish an integration agenda.
4. Find opportunities to implement resilient community principles.
5. Develop a system to measure, monitor, and report efforts.

Case Study 1

Howard County, MD – Integrated Planning Processes

- Mitigation actions presented to a Steering Committee of officials from various departments: Office of Emergency Management, Public Works, Recreation and Parks, Fire and Rescue, Planning and Zoning
- Department representatives spoke to their department's capabilities.
- Provided the opportunity to use mitigation strategies in the comprehensive planning process.

One County, Four Plans



Case Study 2

Lackawanna County, PA – Departmental Integration

- Spearheaded by the Planning Department instead of EMA.
- Integrated HM principles throughout the comprehensive planning process.
- Provided a strong backbone to support plan implementation.
- Better equipped Planning Department for future planning processes integrating risk reduction techniques.



Case Study 3

Miami Dade County, FL – Departmental Integration

- A “hazards and climate lens” put on existing issues.
- County began work on a sustainability plan **‘GreenPrint: Our Design for a Sustainable Future’**.
- OOS worked with NOAA Coastal Services Center, the County DERM, OEM, Water and Sewer department and GIS division to host a participatory workshop for local stakeholders.
- A countywide assessment of risk and vulnerability was conducted.



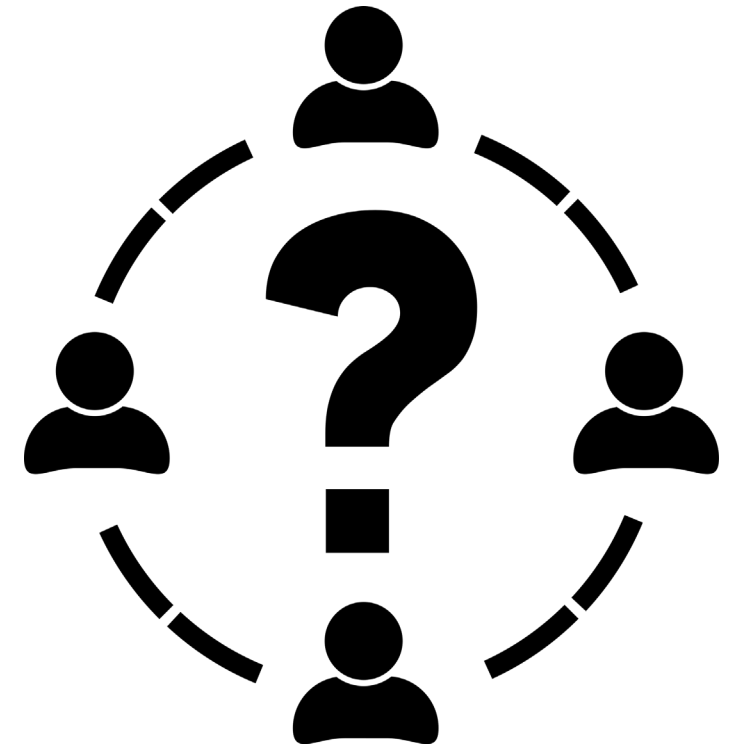
Working Through a Pandemic – Strategies for Continuity of Operations

- Working with limited staff, clear delegation of tasks.
- Working remotely.
- Communicating with constituents and the community.
- Ensuring organization of departmental activities.
- Provide training modules and tutorials for common planning commission procedures/activities.
- Ensuring frequent communication with the public to establish transparency.
- Collaborating with other departments.

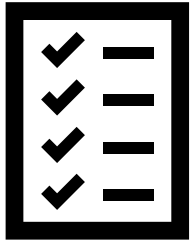
Case Study 4

A Large Mid-Atlantic City – COVID-19 Challenges

- Hasty decision-making without considering possible long-term future consequences.
- Ramped up response, gap in communication – confusion about roles and responsibilities, delegation of authority, etc.
- Lack of transparency within departments, led to staff being rushed to implement decisions.
- Lack of streamlined inter-agency communication, leading to conflicting decision making and work overlaps.



Integrated Planning Efforts Going Forward



- Revisit plans and discuss Lessons Learned.

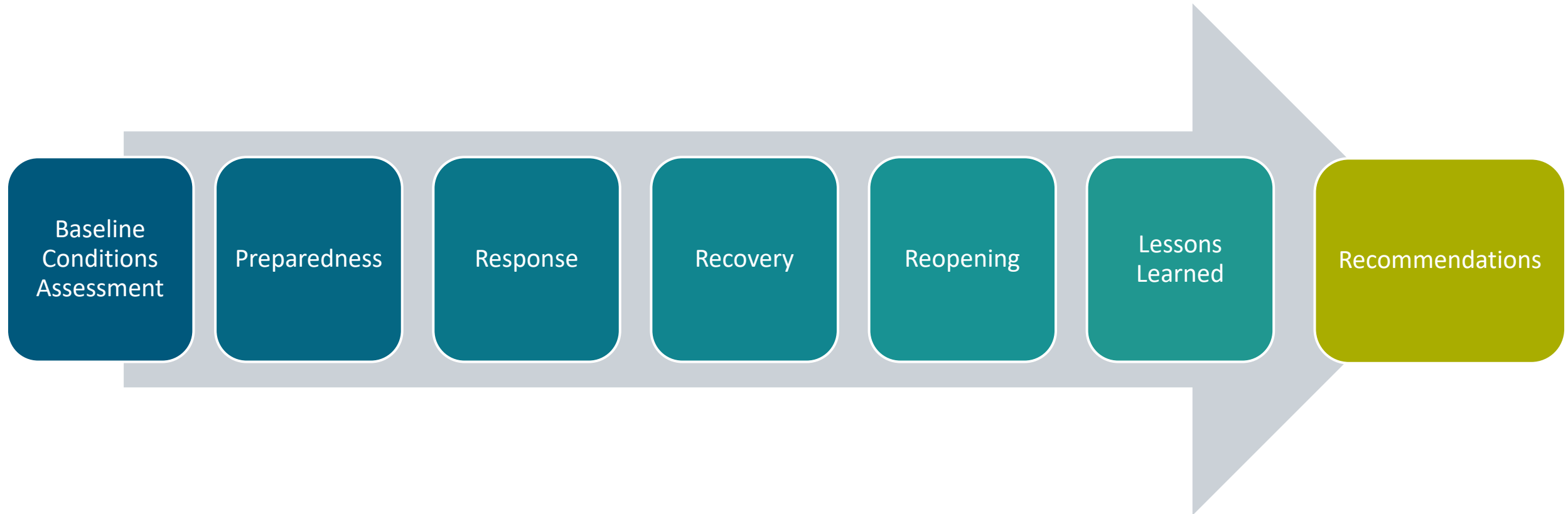


- Understand municipalities' needs.



- Expand Planners reach.

Working Through a Hazard Event



Working Through a Hazard Event – Assessing and Planning

Action	Description	Involvement of Planning Boards/Departments
Baseline Conditions Assessment	Assessing statistics and projections of hazard events, identifying at-risk demographics	Analyzing demographics, impacted industries
Preparedness	Reviewing level of preparedness prior to hazard event and going forward	Raising public awareness, continuity of government
Response	Evaluating immediate and long-term response, individual department response	Incorporate community partner and stakeholder feedback to continuously improve emergency operations plans
Recovery	Documenting the recovery process through various departments	Expediting certain Planning Board/Department functions to recover from hazard
Reopening	Preparing a strategy to safely continue operations by considering various criteria	Continued public awareness messaging
Lessons Learned	Documenting areas of improvement and strategies that worked well	Delegation of roles and responsibilities at various levels to ensure smooth working of departments
Recommendations	Developing an action plan to be better prepared in the face of another hazard	

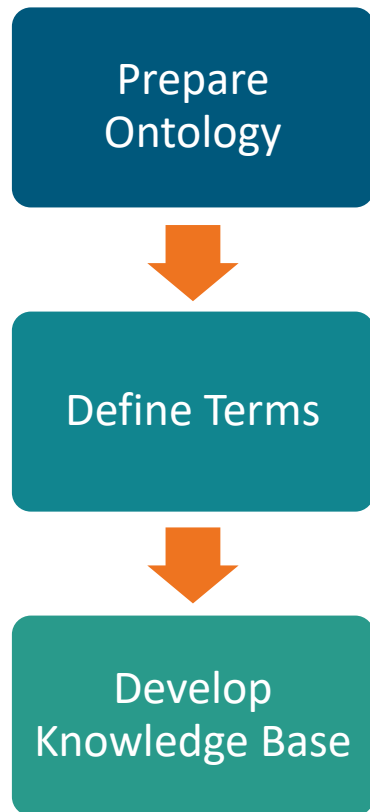
Challenges in Getting Plans to Talk

- Large Number of Local Plans
- Lengthy Documents
- Extensive Review Time
- Inadequate Staff Resources
- Lack of Consistency on Reviews
- Review Prone to Error/Omissions
- Risk of Attrition & Re-training Needs
- Departmental Budget Constraints
- Varying Plan Update Cycles

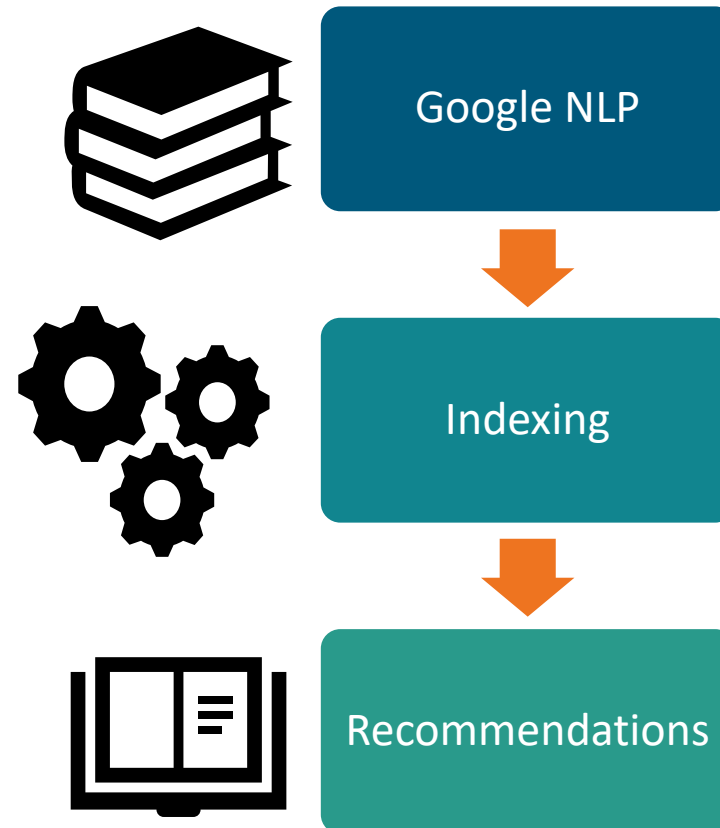


Integration through AI and ML

Phase 1: Build the Brain

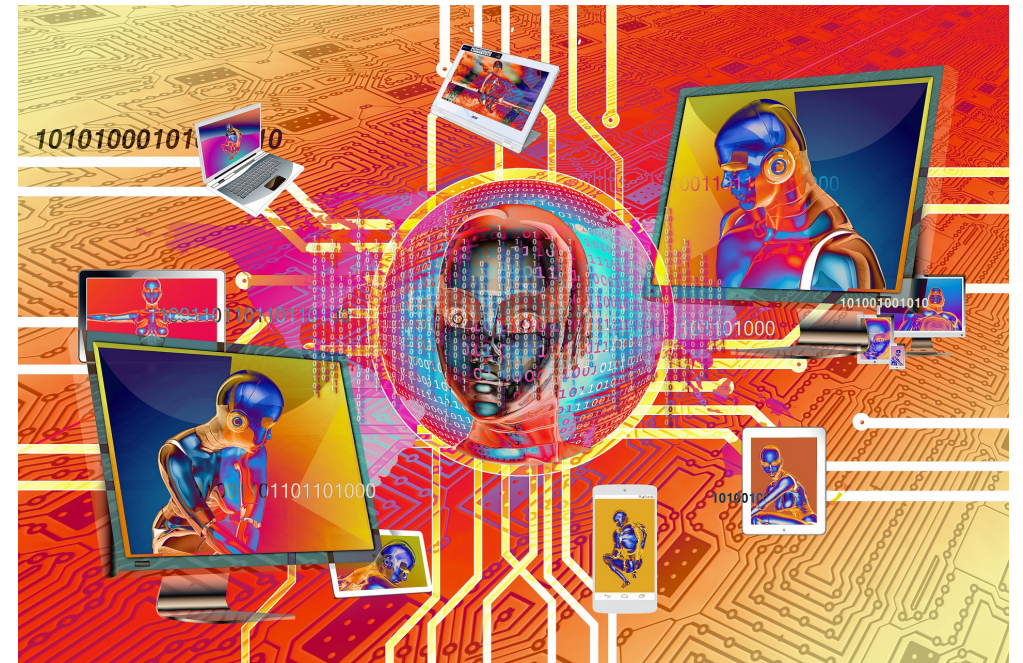


Phase 2: Process the Plans



Benefits

- Captures and Retains Knowledge
- Saves Review Time
- Reduces Errors
- Removes Subjectivity & Maintains Consistency
- Ensures Consistency on Reviews
- Budget Independent
- Works with Plans on Varying Update Cycles
- Allows for Periodic/Regular Gap Analysis between Plans
- Enables Validation and Periodic Testing

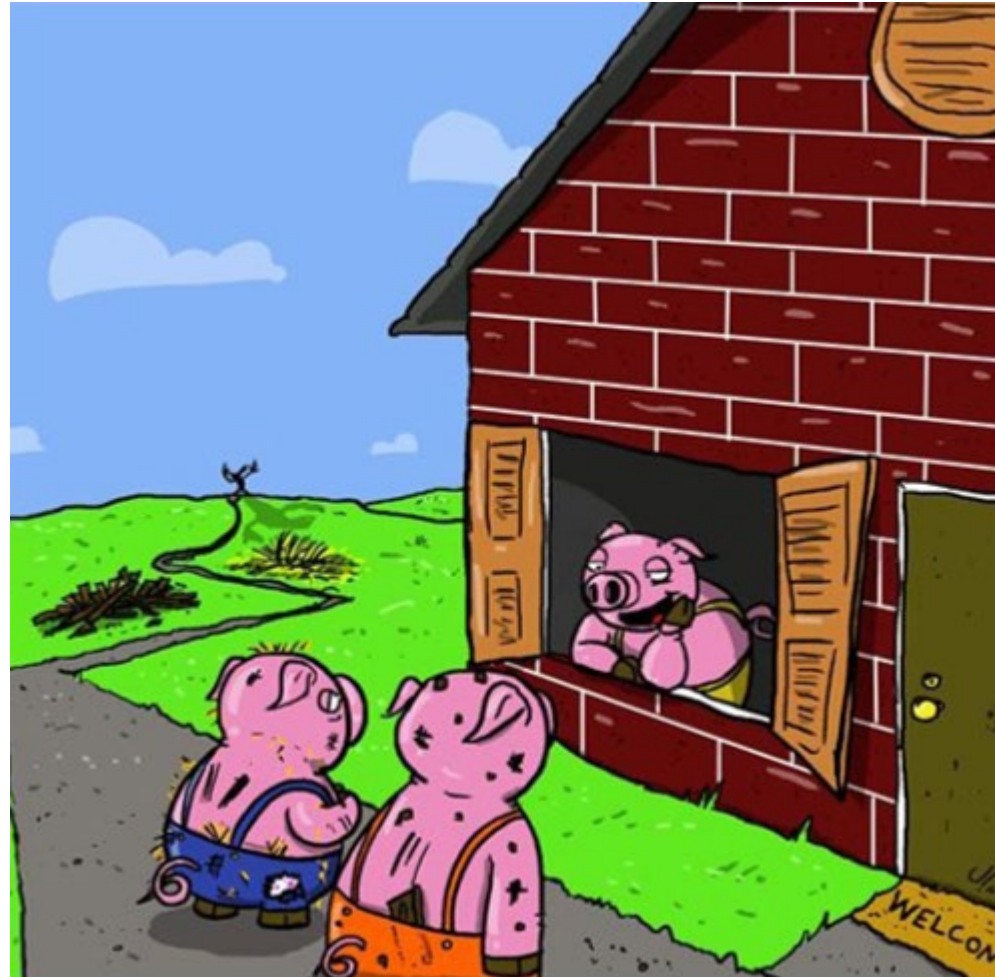


With Integrated Planning Efforts

- Plans will indeed talk!
- People will collaborate!
- Hazards can be mitigated!
- Lives can be saved!

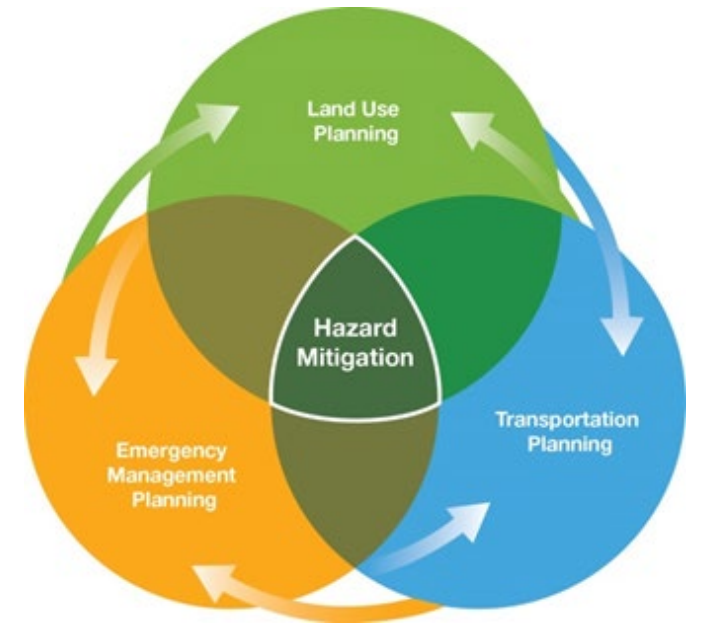
Remember the *Three Little Pigs*...

“I told you so,
Integrate, Integrate, Integrate...”



Let us Reflect!

- What does your community do well in terms of Integrated Planning? Where can these efforts be improved?
- How would Integrated Planning efforts have helped your community respond to COVID-19?
- What are short- and long-term actions that your community can take to adopt or improve Integrated Planning efforts?



Thank You!

Questions?



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