Disaster Planning Housing Workgroup
5/24/12, San Bernardino, CA

Facilitators:
Bill Shoaf, IEM
Scott Smith, Beacon Management Group
EJ Martinez and Sally Richman, LA Housing Department

19 Attendees (staff from):
City of Riverside, Office of Emergency Services
American Red Cross, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside Counties
California Apartment Association
LA County Community Development Commission
San Diego County Office of Emergency Services
LA Housing Department
LA City Building and Safety
San Bernardino Office of Emergency Services
Barker Management
San Bernardino Unified School District
A Community of Friends
Faith Based Organizations Advocates
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

NOTES:

LA County Housing Resources Presentation
Website for housing capacity – housing.lacounty.gov
  1. Managed by socialserve.com
     a. Launched in 2007
  2. Initially designed as a free connection to housing
  3. Has a call center in case internet is not online
  4. Free for property owners and users
  5. Bilingual
  6. Made up mostly of rental units
  7. Ability to match up persons with special needs and homeless housing
  8. Endorsed by largest apartment associations within LA County
  9. Disaster intervention
     a. Disaster recovery plans in place within LA County
     b. Pre-prepared outreach materials
     c. Disaster recovery information included in packet
     d. Post disaster work in 2007 after San Diego wildfires
  10. Potential for partnership with other organizations/counties/cities
  11. Question – did FEMA/HUD provide disaster-planning funding?
      a. Funding through HUD housing locator
i. No additional costs incurred in San Diego fires

12. How would an organization/county/city find funding?
   a. Counties could participate and would depend on scope of work
   b. Are there advantages for partnership?
      i. Existing relationship with socialserve.com
      ii. Have worked with individual cities to create side agreements for cost efficiencies

13. This is an extension of HUD’s national locator
   a. Designed to promote as a housing bulletin board
   b. Facilitates housing relocation towards other geographic areas

14. Who vets landlords?
   a. To prevent fraud or predatory activities

Disaster Housing Discussion
Inspections/getting displaced back into homes

1. Background information
   a. Responsible for 1.2 million buildings to conduct safety assessments
   b. Called safety assessments due to FEMA language – for grant purposes
   c. Post disaster assessments v. safety assessments are different
      i. Post disaster focuses on the safety of the property – i.e. if it’s going to fall on the residents
   d. Post Northridge, conducted 1200 assessments everyday
      i. Multifamily structures result in multiple calls/assessments
      ii. Difficulty in communicating with residents as to safety of the building
      iii. Some buildings coded as ‘yellow’ although only a few units impacted by event and coded either ‘yellow’ or ‘red’
      iv. LA had ‘reassurance’ teams who reached out to those residents living in parks/tents to determine if their home was actually habitable, many were sent home
   e. Creating apps to conduct safety assessments on mobile devices
      i. Can be downloaded on an as needed basis
   f. Creating ‘Build LA’
      i. Links all departments who work in building in LA
   g. Creating ‘virtual office’
      i. To connect wirelessly – improve communication
   h. Biggest issue post event is getting ‘feet on the ground’
      i. Issue is getting 1,000 inspectors then prioritizing which units need inspection first
   i. Infrastructure also needs to be assessed
      i. Now all inspectors are to be trained to assess both buildings and infrastructure since resource pool is finite
   j. Post Northridge – 19,000 residential dwellings red tagged, only 4,000 of those were single family dwellings
   k. Departments cannot waive fees without city/county government approval
Federal funding came in to help, but needed to go through local government approval before use.

Starting point with regulation/code/ordinance changes begins with architects and engineers who can reach out to property insurers to get behind changes.

Stress need for 72 hour self sufficiency, needs to apply to building engineers for multifamily dwellings as well.

Need to communicate what the department looks for so building engineers can conduct self assessment.

Request for assessment check list for building engineers to use prior to building & safety’s arrival (within the 72 hour post event period) – specific for each building as developed by city/county.

1. Concern about liability if city/county develops checklist – is a crack in the wall cosmetic or a more serious issue?
2. May be difficult to develop a one-size fits all checklist.

Property managers can assess basic safety and/or habitability (shutting gas off due to leak).

Post event assessment is called ‘rapid evaluation’, not a room by room assessment.

Looking for major instability or dangers (gas leak).

Not a forensic analysis.

County/City affordable housing is involved in development of many units and attach a listing of housing/local regulations for compliance.

Disaster recovery plan could be included when affordable housing is developed with public funds.

Cultural diversity can determine if a family returns to their home.

Based on past experience (i.e. Kobe or Mexico City earthquakes).

Placards were altered by some owners and others to take advantage of the situation.

Law enforcement became involved after the fact.

Safety assessment team is self sufficient for 72 hours and can begin work immediately.

Can determine where team is by GPS.

Shelters/critical facilities’ are prearranged for assessments.

New LA emergency ops center is focused on communication rather than command and control.

LA has average of one inspector per square mile.

Property managers must have knowledge to help tenants.

Eluded to proposed legislation requiring property managers to be certified on how to protect properties/tenants.

Most large properties have disaster plans in place, concern should be placed on those smaller properties.

Assoc. conducts disaster training and could provide materials to properties.

Some nonprofit affordable housing properties are members of the Assoc.
w. Some housing nonprofits are conducting disaster planning trainings

2. Damage v. Safety Assessments in relation to funding
   a. Can lead to separate sources of funding for immediate and longer term funding

3. Barker Management – Hollywood Community Housing (HCH)
   a. Property managers – conduct day to day inspections
      i. Go beyond Section 8 inspections
      ii. Report of issues to owners immediately
      iii. Engineers tasked to determine extent of any damages
      iv. QUESTION – potential for these licensed engineers to complete safety assessment? Potential for liability brought up.
   b. HCH has high standards for regular inspections
   c. Properties include affordable housing, homeless and special needs
      i. ISSUE – special needs may be on the priority list for assessments
   d. Managers have some disaster training (fires)
   e. Looking forward to providing input and taking information back to owners and residents
   f. ISSUE – how do you inform authorities about special needs tenants?
      i. Housing Asssoc. County of SB is developing a waiver for mobility challenged tenants to file with local fire station to facilitate response post incident
   g. SUGGESTION – redevelopment could be required to provide a summary of important information (i.e. gas shutoffs) in PDF form

4. If a property is damaged to the point it cannot be reoccupied, what funding sources are used to acquire new properties?
   a. Grants, federal funding, tax credits
   b. Properties are held to high standards due to all the federal financial regulations
   c. Most affordable housing developments have many layers of funding and insurance
      i. This can also slows down the acceptance of disaster funding as each layer may have to accept funds
   d. Housing elements, part of housing plan, identifies all affordable housing within the jurisdiction
      i. LA County is identifying these areas in a database with parcel information
      ii. This should lead to faster post event funding
   e. HUD example – fire to senior community in Pasadena, some of the elements considered:
      i. Is there capacity at other properties?
      ii. Is every floor impacted?
      iii. Is the building a total loss?
iv. Other insurance?
v. Then HUD can move forward to find how to assist

f. **QUESTION** – do affordable housing properties have EQ coverage?
   i. Some do, most don’t (HCH indicated they did)
   ii. Property owners are not carrying coverage due to cost and would seek private funding
   1. Some would tap into loss of income coverage to help

g. **EXAMPLE** – Wildfires in 2006/07, County brought in resources for displaced families. Housing Authority brought in vouchers, but most will not used as families had private insurance.

h. **QUESTION** – do mortgage lenders place moratorium on multifamily homes as they do on single-family post event?
   i. Mortgage revenue bond solution to assist lending (done post Northridge), which helped apartment owners
   ii. Private sector will need to be a large part of the post event solution

j. **QUESTIONS** – faith based community representative
   i. Are churches part of the housing plan, post event? Many are serving homeless now.
   ii. CRA – can the community work with FDIC to try to get CRA credits for pre-disaster planning?
   iii. Provide email address so we can visit with interested parties in detail
   iv. HUD staff suggests faith based groups begin involvement now to become an efficient resource – thinking about funds and land, as well as development
   v. The faith based community could provide Interim housing and facilitator role
   vi. Insight about how social serve, in PA, secured information about the location of trailer pads

5. Homeless as part of disaster housing
   a. Most existing programs are available to the homeless
   b. Faith based organizations are currently housing/serving the homeless
      i. CA has highest % of “mega” faith based orgs
      ii. Provide emergency shelter assistance (LA County)
         1. Cots and meals are provided
         2. Wrap around services provided
         3. Most are active as emergency winter shelters (Nov – Jan timeframe)
         4. Probably 100 churches involved
      iii. How do these orgs tap into government funding?
   c. **BEST PRACTICE** – faith based coalitions to be used as a resource for disaster housing, to expand capacity
      i. May be able to share lessons learned, best practices in providing temporary housing
6. Housing Authorities working together about the mobility of disaster vouchers  
   a. No template available for disaster vouchers, but there are protocols for Section 8 vouchers – however, it doesn’t work the same  
   b. There are some protocols in place within the South where deals have been made due to hurricane events

7. If you were in charge, what would you do? (Identify barriers)  
   a. Affordable housing  
      i. Restrictions and requirements can be barriers in serving tenants. They are told they are a priority, but they aren’t treated as such.  
      ii. Need to look more broadly as to who would be affected post disaster (businesses outside of the impact zone that have employees in that area).  
      iii. Parks should be retrofitted for use as temporary housing – pads places, infrastructure in place and in same general community (so kids can go to same school) to facilitate temporary housing.  
   b. Identify a point person who can waive/defer, even temporarily, regulations/codes to move issues forward faster  
   c. Issues with FEMA, state and local – looking at specific issues to secure gov’t preapproval to address certain issues. Need a broad vision that could include transportation, services, etc. How long could those affected remain in temporary housing? Could the trailers be sold to the resident? Tribal lands should be used as well.  
   d. The ability to truly recover and get residents back into homes by fast tracking regulations. Identify, specifically, what cities/counties can expect (what codes/regulations will be relaxed/deferred) with grant requirements should an event occur.  
   e. Develop a “one stop” place to go to obtain information. This could be broken down into jurisdictions with contact numbers and the latest information as to what codes/regulations have been deferred or other valuable resources. This could be a joint information website. Could be at a regional level.  
   f. List of issues/barriers people see so action can be taken and changes made if needed. At federal level, locales must drive changes as feds don’t see the barriers. Share information obtained from federal agencies to make sure all are aware and set precedent. Focus on self reliance – do you know what you will need from local government/feds? Be proactive rather than reactive.  
   g. Have the schools prepared for disasters, to serve as temporary housing or food distribution.  
   h. Focus on tenants as well as the property – should be a facility ready to transfer them. It’s not housing, it’s people.  
   i. Go to all agencies to make sure this discussion continues.  
   j. Should be a regional effort and there should be pressure on federal government to fund pre-disaster efforts. Put a blueprint together for
federal government (Strong Cities/Strong Communities Initiative - HUD) to help smaller cities (working together) to plan for initiatives like disaster planning.

k. Still dealing with reviews and audits for grants provided after Northridge EQ. Cities/locales/jurisdiction should maintain records to help streamline reporting for funds provided post event (grants).

l. Have every jurisdiction within region get together to discuss issues like this.