

Sustainable Communities Peer-to-Peer Recovery Workshop

Greensburg, KS | June 28-29, 2011



Comprehensive Field Report

July 8th, 2011

FINAL DRAFT

The Workshop:

Workshop structure - Informal, discussion format

Tuesday, June 28th - 4:00 to 8:00

- Afternoon orientation and discussion at Methodist church. Group dinner Tuesday night. Networking

Wednesday, June 29th - 8 am to 6 pm

- Morning discussion at Kiowa County Memorial Hospital (KCMH) conference room
- Narrated Bus tour of Greensburg recovery sites
- Group lunch at Arts Center Wednesday
- Recovery tour and discussion at new Kiowa County School complex
- Group discussions at KCMH. Resource organization materials and presentations

Stats:

- Attendees from affected communities/states: 5 MS, 1 AL, 5 MO
- Attendees from other peer communities/states: 1 KS, 1 IA, 1 TX
- Over 10 Greensburg leadership and recovery team members
- Federal agencies with experience in Greensburg – 3 EPA, 1 DOE, 1 USDA (former), 3 FEMA
- Other organizations: APA, AIA, BCLC, South Central Kansas Recovery Organization
- Media Organizations Present – Wichita NBC News Wednesday interviews, FEMA Region 7 External Affairs, Kiowa County Media Center, Kiowa County Signal newspaper

FEMA Public Affairs Video Summarizing the Workshop: “[Strengthening Relationships for Long Term Recovery](#)”

MKSN NBC Wichita, [news clip and article 6/29/11 from ksn.com](#)

Themes for the Workshop*:

Recovery Process	Rebuilding
Recovery Planning and Management	Sustainability
Communication/Messaging	Housing
Coordination	Stakeholders
Community Engagement	Connecting to Resources
Policy Changes	

*as modified by the participants at the workshop

Concept and Purpose of the Workshop:

ESF #14 Long Term Community Recovery has found that the understanding and effectiveness of the long term community recovery process greatly benefits from perspectives and advice from peers of local and state officials. The practical knowledge of local officials that have been through recovery can greatly aid officials new to recovery with key observations. The discussion aids in developing ideas to organize and lead recovery in the short term as well as advance planning for long term recovery. This peer to peer recovery technical assistance is beneficial early in the disaster at the end of the response period and beginning of recovery planning in order to better understand the recovery steps and process. The assistance is also helpful further into long term recovery planning, and again when recovery implementation and management becomes the predominant focus 6-12 months into long term recovery. The forthcoming Community Planning and Capacity Building Recovery Support Function (RSF) emphasizes building capacity of communities and the importance of local knowledge and resilience as the root of effective recovery. Understanding, clear vision and key lessons learned from prior recovery are essential if local officials will truly be able to lead and organize an effective recovery effort.

This workshop was developed to take advantage of the focus on and experience of Greensburg, Kansas, and their success in rebuilding in an innovative and sustainable manner after the devastating F5 tornado in 2007, and to attempt to bring together a critical mass of affected and experienced communities. The format was intended to facilitate discussion, exchange of ideas and experiences directly among community and state participants, with a focus on integrating sustainability concepts, and on the local recovery process, public engagement, organizing and managing recovery. Steve Castaner, ESF #14 LTCR lead for FEMA Region 7, used his experience with LTCR and Greensburg to serve as the facilitator to move discussions along, provoke discussion, and highlight key themes. The focus was on the formulation phases of long term recovery efforts, with illustrations of the outcomes possible using Greensburg, including collaboration and leadership, whole community concepts of partnership, citizen engagement and funding leveraging.

ESF #14 has organized other peer to peer activities, including a video teleconference among Chambers County TX officials and other experienced state and local representatives after Hurricane Ike. A field trip was organized for community recovery team members of Gays Mills WI to visit another community, Darlington, in the northern part of the state that had undertaken a significant recovery and redevelopment effort years earlier.

The workshop is expected to improve the ability of community officials to lay the ground work in their communities for more effective use of all manner of recovery funding from government, non-government and private sector. The concept of a peer to peer recovery workshop, is a cost effective method of long term recovery technical assistance.

Sustainable Communities Peer-to-Peer Recovery Workshop

Greensburg, KS | June 28-29, 2011

Day One: Meet and Greet at United Methodist Church

On June 28th, attendees met at the United Methodist Church and were welcomed by Greensburg Mayor Bob Dixon. Mayor Dixon encouraged attendees to take advantage of the expertise in the room. He emphasized that as a result of the disaster, there is an opportunity to do things differently. Matt Deighton, Greensburg resident and coordinator for South Central Kansas Tornado Recovery Organization, showed PowerPoint images of the destruction and the progress since the 2007 tornado. He emphasized the importance of partnership with federal agencies, focusing on the youth in the community post-disaster and highlighted the successes in Greensburg including the installation of wind turbines, the SunChips business incubator, and construction of the water tower which now has double the capacity of the prior water tower. An attendee asked how Greensburg came to the decision to rebuild green. Superintendent of schools Darren Headrick noted that the future of Greensburg was not promising prior to the tornado, so the question was asked what could the city do to make people want to live here and start and keep businesses here...what makes us different? This discussion led to the decision to rebuild green and has resulted in groundbreaking architecture in this small town of 800, garnering awards and recognition worldwide.

Communities Recently Affected by Tornadoes

Joplin, MO – Pop: 50,000

F5 tornado struck on May 22, 2011 and caused 156 deaths damaged 1/3 of the city - at least 8,000 homes/businesses.

Duquesne, MO – Pop: 2,000

F5 tornado struck on May 22, 2011, at least 8 killed, damaged 60-70% of buildings

Smithville, MS – Pop. 857

F5 tornado struck on April 27, 2011, At least 16 killed, destroyed 153 homes and 14 of 16 businesses.

Cordova, AL – Pop. 2,000

Hit by two tornadoes in 12 hours on April 27, 2011, four killed, caused severe damage to housing and downtown area.

Robert Guy Jackson (former Mayor of Anhuac, TX and chairman of the Chambers County Recovery committee) noted that “you have to believe in this [LTCR] process, because the process works. It is how you utilize and implement that makes the difference.” He also emphasized that communities have to make their recovery plan a living breathing document.”

One attendee said that what took 20-30 minutes to destroy, the community wants rebuilt in 20-30 minutes. There is a pressure to get things back to normal quickly, but there is an opportunity to engage community members and rebuild better.

Attendees expressed their desire to learn about how Greensburg engaged residents throughout the recovery process, communicated with residents about recovery, got community buy-in on “rebuilding green” and put ordinances/policies in place to formalize sustainable building practices¹. Attendees also wanted to understand the timeline for recovery in Greensburg and learn how they could expedite the recovery process while still doing their due diligence, while balancing the needs of multiple sectors. State representatives wanted to ensure they were being helpful to disaster-impacted communities. In a post-disaster environment, everyone wants their needs addressed first – representatives wanted to know how to keep the community informed and relatively satisfied with the recovery progress.



Housing, particularly low income, workforce housing was a challenge mentioned by Joplin– gap financing for residential resources as there’s a large number of uninsured homeowners. Additionally, a number of people started organizing recovery efforts on their own and it has been a challenge to harness all of those ongoing efforts for the overall recovery of the community.

After introductions and a conversation about workshop expectations, attendees had an opportunity for peer to peer conversation over dinner.

Day Two: Kiowa County Memorial Hospital Meeting Room

Activities: Peer-to-Peer Discussion, Greensburg Bus Tour, Kiowa County School Tour

Attendees met in a meeting room at Kiowa County Memorial Hospital (which also serves as a safe room), on Wednesday, June 29th. To start the day, Mayor Bob Dixson gave a presentation

¹ The Greensburg ordinance requires that all newly constructed or renovated municipally-owned buildings larger than 4,000 square feet must be designed to conform to the LEED platinum rating of the U.S. Green Building Council Rating System. Resolution No. 2007-17: Pertaining to LEED Building Standards -

<http://www.dsireusa.org/documents/Incentives/KS06R.pdf>

that focused on the importance of sustainability and visionary leadership post-disaster. Each community has to determine its core values and those values drive recovery decisions. He noted that sustainability is about the capacity to endure and meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. He emphasized the importance of relationship and partnership – communities have to walk side by side with outside resources to make the community a better place to live. The Mayor defined visionary management as anticipating fires and how you will handle them when they come instead of being reactive and being in crisis management mode. “Great things happen when there is a total disregard for who gets credit.” The recovery of the community is about future generations – the community has to think about where they want to be in 50-100 years.

Attendees were offered a bus tour of Greensburg before lunch. Attendees were able to see rebuilt housing, including USDA self-help housing, the Kiowa Commons Media Center that includes library, extension center offices, soda fountain, and media center. The bus also drove past the LEED platinum school facility and ended at the 5.4.7 Arts Center. The 5.4.7 Arts Center was built by graduate architecture students from the University of Kansas. It was the first building in Kansas to receive a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Platinum rating. Attendees conversed over lunch and before walking on Main Street to view the business incubator, shops and visitor center newly built since the tornado.



In the afternoon, attendees were given a guided tour of the Kiowa County School facility by Superintendent Darin Headrick. The school facility, built to replace the elementary and high school destroyed in the tornado, houses K-12 students. This school has achieved LEED Platinum status with features such as concrete floors, use of natural day lighting, rainwater storage tank, a 50 kilowatt wind generator, hall lockers built from recycled plastic and geothermal HVAC systems. One example of the benefit of its sustainable



building innovations is the school system uses 45% less water than the prior school facility; its water tank holds 210,000 gallons. This state of the art facility is one way that Greensburg hopes to attract families to live in their community.

Residents had the option to sign up for tours at the following sites around Greensburg after the workshop including the LEED certified John Deere Dealership and the Kiowa County Commons, which contains the County Historical Museum, the Kiowa County Media Center, and the offices of Kansas State Research and Extension.

The attendees returned to the Kiowa County Memorial Hospital Meeting room in the afternoon to continue peer to peer discussion. The major themes and topics covered during the discussion are outlined below.

Key Theme: Community Engagement and Recovery Planning

Initial public meetings are important both to inform and to help residents reconnect and share experiences. Greensburg representatives noted that it is important to hold meetings to keep people informed, but also to be respectful of people's time. Meetings that are open to public comment/questions can last for hours. Having outside facilitators can really help create an efficient process that engages all who wish to participate in community discussion.



Greensburg's Mayor Dixon

One attendee asked about leadership changes during the recovery. There were leadership changes in Greensburg, but as a Greensburg representative noted, the Greensburg plan was a community effort – that is what keeps it valid through any leadership changes. In terms of visioning, Greensburg started in the same place in what they believed but needed to find a common way to say it. Greensburg recovery leadership went on a retreat in Pratt about 3 months post-disaster to develop the community vision based on what the community was saying during initial public meetings. The community's values have to be defined before you develop a vision statement.

It was noted that a disaster magnifies any existing issues in the community and Greensburg is no exception. However, because everyone is working to get the community rebuilt, those divisions are not as important anymore. If there are conflicts throughout the recovery, it is important to revisit the vision statement- one attendee likened it to the constitution in terms of being a foundation document for the community to continually revisit.

Greensburg used the Public Square process which engages stakeholders within four sector groups: Business, Education, Government and Human Services. FEMA LTCR worked within this process in guiding the community through a 12-week planning process. Within the Public Square framework, Greensburg established a steering committee, sector focused groups and recovery action teams to engage community members post-disaster.

- **Stakeholder Recovery Committee** - serves as a coordination and information sharing entity.
- **Sector focused groups** (Business, Education, Government and Human Services) have to stay within their focus areas so as not to duplicate efforts. Communication with the public about the recovery was essential, but according to Superintendent Darin Headrick, it was important to let these sector groups do the work entrusted to them and continue to move forward.
- **Recovery Action Teams** - Recovery action teams in Greensburg addressed specific projects that were immediately actionable, for instance, building a playground, landscaping, or planning a community celebration. In this way you drew in people who would not normally serve on a committee but are willing to contribute in other ways. According to Mayor Dixon, that camaraderie helps people to go from a grieving process to a healing process.



Greensburg public recovery planning under the big tent

Key Theme: Communication/Messaging

Getting the community together to meet and sharing information along each step of recovery quells speculation and rumors. Greensburg held its first meeting 7 days post disaster.

One attendee asked about getting all aspects of the community involved and how to approach public messaging to minimize confusion. Greensburg resident Carmen Staub shared her experiences as Public Information Officer in Greensburg. The city used yellow paper for their messaging to make it stand out. Anyone with recovery information submitted it to the PIO, or shared it at emergency operations center meetings. These daily information flyers were only



one page, front and back so as not to overwhelm people with information. The deadline for inclusion in the yellow sheet was 3pm daily, and the sheets were produced by 6 am the next morning. Early on, anyone driving into Greensburg had to pass through a police checkpoint, so the police were given yellow sheets to give out to individuals driving into/out of the community.

For those considering using a similar system for information distribution, Aaron Todd suggested having a community meeting and having resident put a dot where they are currently living – this will help determine where yellow sheets should be distributed.

Radio transmitters were placed in communities where displaced residents were staying so people could hear current information on a 24 hour a day radio station.

They also started a blog that contained much of the same information that was on the yellow sheet-this blog continues to be updated (<http://greensburgks.blogspot.com>).

Key Theme: Keeping the Spotlight on your Community

Greensburg resident Matt Deighton said he learned that there is a small window of time – 4-18 months – where your community will be in the spotlight post-disaster. It is critical to establish and maintain relationships. In Greensburg, the community continues to look for project funding. Kim noted that it is important to be deliberate about finding people or organizations

that can tell your community's story when there are potential funders at the table. Brandon Dake (Regional President, AIA Springfield) noted that Greensburg has shown how we should be messaging and packaging recovery in positive terms in order to market the community.

Receiving awards for community design and recovery post-disaster lends credibility and increases awareness of your community's recovery. Greensburg received the Siemens Sustainable Community Award in the small community category this year. The community also honored with the Global Green City award by the United Nations in 2011. Jim Schwab



mentioned that APA has planning awards that can help communities receive recognition for their recovery efforts.

Gene West, former Kiowa County Commissioner, noted that communities need to think creatively about recovery projects so that companies will want to stand behind them and support them.

Key Theme: Technical Assistance and Funding Resources

American Planning Association - Jim Schwab noted that the APA Planning Advisory Service (PAS) report *Planning for Post-Disaster Recovery and Reconstruction* has helpful information for communities the recovery phase; the guide is currently being updated for release in 2013. Jim encouraged attendees to visit <http://www.planning.org/research/postdisaster> to stay apprised of the status of the new PAS report and to access available material from the new report. Additionally, he mentioned the APA Recovery blog at <http://blogs.planning.org/postdisaster>, which communities can contribute to if they have experiences or guidance to share.

Business Civic Leadership Center - Gerald McSwiggan of the Business Civic Leadership Center in Washington DC provided great insight about capitalizing on corporate resources post-disaster. He noted that corporate foundations are interested in helping communities post-disaster. Generally, the local chamber of commerce is the point of entry into the community for corporations. After the California wildfires, the BCLC set up a hotline for small businesses to help them navigate resources – the number is 888-MY BIZ HELP / 888-692-4943. According to the BCLC website, the helpdesk was created for small businesses to access in following circumstances:

- You are in the impact area and want help with FEMA, SBA, and other assistance programs (or for international disasters, if you want help coordinating with U.S.-based NGOs and U.S. government aid agencies).
- You want information about recovery best practices.
- You want to support the recovery process and connect with chambers or businesses in the impact area.

More information on the BCLC disaster assistance and recovery resources can be found at <http://bclc.uschamber.com/programs/disaster>.

Mr. McSwiggan noted that corporations want to see prioritization of recovery projects. Prioritization of recovery projects is part of the LTCR process and as Mr. McSwiggan noted, having projects prioritized when funders come to the table is an advantage.

U.S Department of Agriculture (USDA) - During the tour of Greensburg, Mr. Banks pointed out the Self-Help Housing program homes along the street. This program provides low and very low income households with the opportunity to own their own home. For more information about this program, visit the following link:

http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rhs/sfh/brief_selfhelpsite.htm

USDA representative Chuck Banks was able to get waivers in place to assist Greensburg in obtaining USDA housing funds. The waivers put in place and the partnerships established to obtain funding for housing through a modification of the Self help housing program took about 7 months to bring to fruition. The way that USDA operated in Greensburg is not necessarily the way it will operate in other communities, but this example shows that existing programs can be creatively applied to address community needs.

The USDA contributed funding for a number of Greensburg projects, including a loan to Greensburg Wind Farm, LLC, to finance the wind turbine project that will supply power to Greensburg and surrounding communities (with additional funding through an equity investment by Deere & Company), the business incubator in downtown Greensburg (funded through USDA, Frito-lay corporation and a donation from Leonardo DiCaprio) and the Kiowa County Commons project (funded with insurance money, FEMA and USDA funds).

Department of Energy, National Renewable Energy Laboratories (NREL) – A representatives from NREL gave a handout listing resources that NREL can provide to disaster impacted communities. According to the handout, “State and local governments, Indian tribes, and overseas U.S. territories may apply to receive technical assistance from NREL for understanding

and deploying energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies. Technical assistance includes:

- **Project Assistance** - renewable energy siting, green buildings, technical assessments, and measurement and evaluation
- **Program Design** - energy efficiency and renewable energy assessments and portfolio design, sustainable community design, and assistance with reducing international barriers
- **Contract Assistance** - technical specifications development for requests for proposals (RFPs) and performance contracting
- **Financing Policies and Programs** - design and structure of revolving loan funds, loan loss reserves, credit mechanisms, and leveraging private investment
- **Planning** - strategic planning, energy management, building codes, project screening, and cost and capacity factors
- **Policy Analysis** - local, state, federal, and financial
- **Skills Development** - trainings, workshops, peer matching, and Webinars

Further information on NREL can be found at:

http://www.nrel.gov/applying_technologies/state_local_activities/technical_assistance.html

Specific information on how the Department of Energy and NREL assisted Greensburg, KS after the 2007 tornadoes, can be found here: <http://www1.eere.energy.gov/deployment/greensburg>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – David Doyle of the Office of Sustainable Communities noted that they are not a funding agency, they are a technical assistance agency. He offered a handout with a listing of all the technical expertise that the EPA can offer. The first page of the handout listed the following summary of technical capabilities related to smart growth that the EPA offers:

- Audits of development codes and policies to identify and overcome barriers in codes and policies leading to smart growth.
- Design of “New Urban” mixed-use, walkable, infill development communities
- Economic development studies, market analysis
- Transportation planning, transit-oriented development, parking studies
- Design of complete streets
- Sustainable site design/green buildings
- Application of green infrastructure for stormwater management
- Design of habitat restoration, open space preservation
- Health impacts of community design standards

He noted that this technical assistance is available anytime, not just after disasters.

EPA Region 7 put together an ad-hoc committee of federal, state and local agencies to address sustainable issues. The EPA worked with the people of Greensburg, state and local officials, FEMA's recovery team, and other assisting agencies during a two-month process to create the sustainable section of the Long-Term Community Recovery Plan.

EPA Smart Growth website - <http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/>

For information on how FEMA ESF#14 and the EPA partnered in assisting Iowa communities, go to this link: http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/pdf/2010_0302_iap_iowa_factsheet.pdf

American Institute of Architects (AIA) - The AIA Springfield chapter has been contacted by several architects about how they can assist in the Joplin recovery – the AIA has a sustainable design assistance team and an regional/urban design assistance team. These teams can assess, define priorities, engage communities and create visuals. The AIA representative for Springfield, MO has been working with Joplin leadership post-disaster and suggested other communities reach out to their local chapter as well as school of architecture students to assist in problem solving during the rebuilding process.

Sustainable Design Assistance Teams - <http://www.aia.org/about/initiatives/AIAS075425>
Regional/Urban Design Assistance Teams - <http://www.aia.org/about/initiatives/AIAS075372>

FEMA ESF#14 LTCR – FEMA ESF#14 LTCR staff works with disaster impacted communities to identify and coordinate funding resources and provide recovery planning support. In Greensburg, FEMA ESF#14 LTCR staff worked with Public Square stakeholders to identify issues and needs, develop a post-disaster recovery vision, identify recovery projects, and prepare of recovery plan. The LTCR team also helped the community to organize a Rebuilding Fair.

For more information on FEMA ESF#14:

<http://www.fema.gov/rebuild/ltrc/index.shtm>

For information on current news in recovering communities:

<http://www.longtermcommunityrecovery.blogspot.com/>

Other resources mentioned in the discussion were State tax credit programs to incentivize rebuilding businesses and the use of the AmeriCorps program. In Greensburg, AmeriCorps members helped with tasks such as painting, cleaning, planting trees, volunteer management, needs assessments and debris cleanup. They can also help with elements of the planning process. The VISTA program is also a possible resource through Americorps.

Key “Take-Aways” Noted By Participants

- Importance of emphasizing Visionary Management versus getting trapped in Crisis Management. There is a need to do visionary management at the same time as crisis management. Long term recovery requires visionary management.
- Plans built from the ground up, with strong involvement and buy-in from the community members survived political leadership changes in communities and moved more effectively to implementation. However the group also stressed that recovery plans are very much living documents that change over time.
- To confront conflict, and move past it, involve people, get buy-in, give everyone a voice.
- The concept of an Action Team approach during recovery planning and implementation. This provides a way to have actionable, time-bound activities that demonstrate that the community is moving forward in recovery. Served to deflect some of the frustration with residents on too much talk and not enough action.
- Importance of structuring and managing organizations established for organizing community input. Need to manage sector groups in conjunction with a steering committee and with considered occasional full community town hall meetings.
- Communication was emphasized as important throughout all phases. During long term recovery planning, constant communication as to meeting, ideas, focus, outcomes was important. The group also discussed Greensburg’s use of their “yellow sheet” to consolidate all essential recovery information, both short and long term on key meetings, updates, etc and distributing widely.
- Timelines are important. Emphasis on the long term view, and communities doing “the right thing”. Getting it right the first time. One Greensburg resident noted that after a disaster you feel a sense of urgency but looking back, you realize you could have taken more time.
- Establishing building codes, while unpopular at first, was very important and the right thing to do if they were going to have a sustainable community. This was a particular point of discussion among Smithville and Greensburg participants.

- The recovery planning process is important for the community healing process, among leaders and residents. Even among the peer communities with prior experience at the workshop, it was noted that this workshop was a continuation of their recovery and healing process as well.
- Creative financing was discussed throughout, as an element of partnerships, using resources of the whole community. It was discussed during the tour. The emphasis tended toward locating other sources of funds to leverage federal or state resources. There was also discussion of challenges with facilitating long term housing solutions, given market prices, prevailing incomes, programs, private financing etc. Greensburg's self help housing projects were discussed and viewed, and noted differences from other USDA self help programs highlighted.
- The establishment of a local 501c3 community organization, to be a facilitator of non-governmental and private sector funds for community recovery projects was noted as very important. It aided with the use of funds to avoid conflicts with duplication of benefits in federal programs, and allowed for much needed flexibility. Those donating money need to be precise about what it should be used for and the community needs to make sure it is used expressly for that purpose.
- Use the opportunities presented by the disaster, not only in funding, but in interest, good will partnerships, donations, establishment of a new vision and focus for the community, etc.
- Involve all potential resources in the community process.
- The commitment of the business community, at large is important. Getting businesses back is a challenge every community faces. Businesses are waiting for people to return and people are judging whether to come back based on the businesses reopening, among other factors. Business owners in Greensburg got together to discuss which owners were staying and which were going. Many business owners felt more confidence in affirming their commitment to stay when they saw others were determined to stay as well.



- The community cannot focus only on housing, or business, or community facilities re-establishment. The group acknowledged the dilemma of what comes first, and concluded that all come first and communities should not get hung up on one but build all at the same time. It was important to establish a general commitment among Greensburg business to commit to coming back, even though individually many businesses remained unsure for quite some time. Community attitude and momentum is important.
- All communities felt that their role in the workshop and future was important to them to “pay it forward” to provide help to other communities with critical observations and experience they gained in recovery.
- The Governor of your state can be a powerful advocate for your recovery projects – save your chips and use them wisely. In Greensburg, the Dillon grocery chain was closing some stores before the 2007 tornado in Greensburg and after the disaster targeted the Dillons as one of its stores to be closed. The Governor was able to serve as an advocate to keep Dillons, albeit in a smaller footprint – they created a smaller grocery store attached to Kwik Shop, the Kroger convenience store chain.
- There will be people that come to the table post-disaster who are self-promoting. There are some good things that come out of the individuals and organizations approaching the community, but the community needs to be prepared to carefully assess each opportunity.
- New leadership will emerge post-disaster – people who have not been involved previously may step up post-disaster.
- It is important to have multiple funding scenarios for each recovery project. If federal agency response is “no” on funding a recovery project, find out why. Is it because of statute? Is it because of policy? Work with the federal agency as a partner to accomplish your community’s goals.
- Greensburg had hundreds of volunteers coming into the community to assist. In order to house them, the city wrote a grant to get funding for land development and then worked with the city to acquire a piece of land. They created an RV park for volunteers and charged volunteers a small fee for housing.

- Greensburg representatives noted at various times throughout the conference the idea that “even change changes...” Facilities when rebuilt were not always in the same location and businesses did not look the same, but they did come back, and the change was often an improvement.

Additional Observations By Participants

Duquesne Missouri: We need a broader focus, ensure community participation, and act now to begin recovery process.

Smithville Mississippi: Workshop has been valuable opportunity to think long term. See much similarity with Greensburg. Need to focus more on organizing and focusing sector groups. Provided a better understanding of city level issues and challenges of recovery. Communication process important for current struggles. Need for establishing a plan of action for leveraging funding ideas.

State of Mississippi: Will need to focus more on resource strategies. Appreciated the concepts from Mayor Dixon's talk about visionary management. Organized involvement of businesses early was significant.

State of Missouri: More need for state to focus on the community needs before focusing on applying programs. What do communities really need? Need to focus state resources to better help communities on the technical side.

Joplin, Missouri: There is a clear need for a process and framework for local recovery, especially sold on the need for a steering committee and better communication between the sectors. Better define sector groups and clearly assign people to things and focus them on progress in that sector. Not everyone can do or be involved in everything. Don't look backward; keep the focus forward.

Cordova, Alabama: Encouraging to hear and understand the timeline and planning needed in Greensburg. It doesn't have to be done all at once or by tomorrow.

Greensburg, Kansas: Expressed that having this workshop and sharing experiences with other disaster impacted communities is one more step in their healing process. Mayor Dixon summed it by saying "Never, never, never, give up hope."

Workshop Evaluations

FEMA is still awaiting additional evaluation forms from participants, but those received so far indicate that attendees appreciated the opportunity for discussion with peer communities. For those who have recently been impacted by disaster, hearing about the experiences of Greensburg and other peer communities in their recovery was instructive. For many attendees, the workshop confirmed the importance of community participation and showcased the successful outcome of leveraging resources.

Based on the evaluations received so far, examples of actions attendees plan to take as a result of the workshop include:

- Stress the importance of schools to recovery and community participation.
- Encourage physical presence of state/federal personnel in affected communities
- Try to keep everyone looking forward and remaining positive
- Don't simply accept "we can't do that" - push the envelope for the betterment of the impacted community.

Attendee suggestions for future peer-to-peer workshops include:

- Add one additional morning be added to the workshop to allow more time for discussion
- Spend additional time focusing on leveraging resources to foster ideas on how to create a plan of action for the communities in attendance.
- Have breakouts by jurisdiction (federal, state, local) if there is a larger scale workshop.
- Bring people from Greensburg to communities affected by disasters.

Additional Resources

CTRL + Click to follow links below

Greensburg Plans

[Greensburg Long Term Community Recovery Plan](#)

This is the post disaster plan developed by the City and its residents to guide key disaster recovery projects. The plan was developed with the assistance of FEMA's ESF #14 Long Term Community Recovery program and the State of Kansas. The State of Kansas hired [Public Square Communities LLC](#) to assist in the community visioning and public engagement.

[Downtown Master Plan](#) - Identified in original LTCR plan as a recommended project

[Greensburg Sustainable Master Plan](#)

Case Studies

[Kiowa County Memorial Hospital, Rebuilding It Better, Greensburg, Kansas](#)
[Out of the Rubble and Towards a Sustainable Future: The "Greening" of Greensburg, Kansas](#)

[Greensburg GreenTown - loads of case studies, posters, publications](#)

Related Resources

[FEMA's Long Term Community Recovery Planning Self Help Guide](#)
[Department of Energy Resources for Rebuilding Green after Disasters](#)
[Building or Buying Green Homes: What to Consider after a Housing Disaster](#)
[Council of State Community Development Agencies Disaster Recovery Toolkit](#)

[Examples of Other Community Recovery Plans and Efforts Supported by ESF #14](#)
[Rebuild Iowa Office Community Recovery Tool Kits](#)

