

Subject: Re: Fwd: "Lessons From Katrina" - New VTPI Paper

Date: Tue, 20 Sep 2005 14:46:18 -0700

From: Carolanne Reynolds <EditorWVM@WestVan.org>

To: Elizabeth James <cagebc@yahoo.com>, Brian Platts <bplatts@shaw.ca>, Corrie Kost <kost@triumf.ca>, "James Ridge, CAO" <james_ridge@dnv.org>

CC: FONVCA <fonvca@fonvca.org>

thx, Liz

In a rush however wanted to point out that about a week ago -- and I shd hv snipped it out -- the VSun had a couple of paragraphs on how hurricanes are handled elsewhere.

You may know that the US refused help from Cuban doctors. Jamaica has better emergency preparedness than New Orleans had (even if better than the debacle that happened). Cuba has a map of the city with the most vulnerable areas marked and even the homes identified of the families that need special assistance for evacuation (and everyone is told how as part of the plan already in place) in case they need extra help.

On top of that, US engineers just reported that had the levees been maintained as they were supposed to be (don't forget the US govt spent millions on a bridge to an unpopulated island in Alaska and cut the levee budget for New Orleans), they wd hv withstood the hurricane (as they did) AND the surge. IOW, they wd not have broken.

One of our failure modes -- for West Van -- is being cut off from a hospital if both the Upper Levels and the bridge east to NV are taken out.

.....carolanne.....

At 4:27 PM +0100 9/20/05, Elizabeth James wrote:

Good Morning, Everyone:

Could anyone who has an interest in being involved to take Todd Litman up on his invitation to suggest additions or amendments? After that, I'd really like to see the document as widely distributed as possible, to start people thinking. We cannot just lapse into election mode and wait until next year.

Examples:

- Mr. Ridge, could Staff be tasked to review it and then have something go out to residents? Would you be kind enough to send it to members of the NSTA and TPAC Committees for their consideration. Should there be a motion suggested to Council? Bearing in mind some of the geography, should Squamish & Whistler be included in our communications, or do we rely on them being able to "get out" by going the other way?
- Brian, Corrie, could it/should it go up on the FONVCA site?

In the meantime, I'll be sending it out to some of my list of contacts who might be interested and we can go from there.

Regards,

Liz

Todd Alexander Litman <litman@vtpi.org> wrote:

Date: Tue, 20 Sep 2005 07:18:47 -0700

From: Todd Alexander Litman <litman@vtpi.org>

Subject: "Lessons From Katrina" - New VTPI Paper

For Immediate Release: 20 September 2005

"Lessons From Katrina: What A Major Disaster Can Teach Transportation Planners" (<http://www.vtpi.org/katrina.pdf>)

By Todd Litman

Summary

This paper examines failures in Hurricane Katrina disaster response and their lessons for transportation policy and planning in other communities. It identifies various policy and planning strategies that can help create a more efficient, equitable and resilient transport system.

The evacuation plan functioned relatively well for motorists, but failed to serve people who depend on public transit. Transport planners can help prevent future disasters by demanding that emergency response plans devote at least as much attention to the evacuation and care of non-drivers as they do to motorists.

Non-drivers include many people with various physical, economic and social problems. Planners need to anticipate these people's needs. This may require special community outreach and communications activities to build understanding and trust among planners and the people they serve.

From a transport planning perspective, the greatest mistake in New Orleans was the lack of a detailed action plan to dispatch buses for evacuating transit-dependent residents. Such a plan would include an inventory of all available buses and essential staff, and pre-established procedures to deploy buses when an evacuation order is announced.

It is important to understand why many people ignored evacuation orders. Many faced logistical or financial barriers obtaining transport out of the city. Many had nowhere to go and were fearful of emergency shelter conditions. Some stayed to protect their property or pets, or out of bravado. Addressing these objections would increase evacuation order response.

A variety of planning policies and programs can help create a more resilient transport system. These increase system diversity and integration, improve user information, prioritize use of infrastructure, and provide special services during emergencies. These can benefit everybody in a community, even people who currently rely on automobile transportation.

Sincerely,

Todd Alexander Litman
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"Efficiency - Equity - Clarity"

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Yours thoughtfully,
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