



In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Science

Mary Fastiggi

Will present her scientific paper

Institutionalizing Urban Resilience: Coordination Strategies Within 20 North American City Governments

Abstract

City governments are increasingly interested in the concept of urban resilience. While theoretical debates continue to develop and critique the value of 'urban resilience,' a growing number of cities are organizing policies and projects around the concept. Building urban resilience is viewed as a key concern for cities facing, in particular, climatic threats –although other urban challenges and equity concerns are increasingly prioritized. Support from city leadership and large funding opportunities, such as the Rockefeller Foundation's 100 Resilient Cities program, have encouraged some leading cities to create and manage city-wide resilience strategies. Yet pioneering cities have few guideposts to institutionalize resilience. This research evolved out of conversations with city officials who were interested to learn how other cities were organizing resilience work. We explore how urban resilience is being structured and coordinated in 20 North American cities, focusing on emerging definitions, organizational structures, internal and external coordination efforts and practitioners' insights. Based off our 20 interviews with practitioners, we developed 6 key findings for structuring resilience work in cities effectively. These include: establishing a clear, contextual definition, bringing communities into the process, describing roles and responsibilities, balancing a centralized and dispersed approach, recognizing tradeoffs in organizational placement, and championing the agreed-upon vision. We situate our findings on emerging governance approaches and lessons learned within the current urban resilience literature on governance by reviewing 40 academic articles and comparing recurrent factors for successful implementation in theory with those we found in practice. This research project provides practitioners' insights to help facilitate resilience work within their cities and adds to the scholarly debate on moving resilience theory toward implementation.

Wednesday, April 10, 2019
1:45pm
Wrigley Hall, Room 408

Faculty, students, and the general public are invited.

Supervisory Committee:
Sara Meerow (Chair)
Scott Cloutier (Co-chair)
Thad Miller (Member)