



THE PARTNERSHIP
FOR INCLUSIVE DISASTER STRATEGIES



Strengthening Transit Evacuation Plans

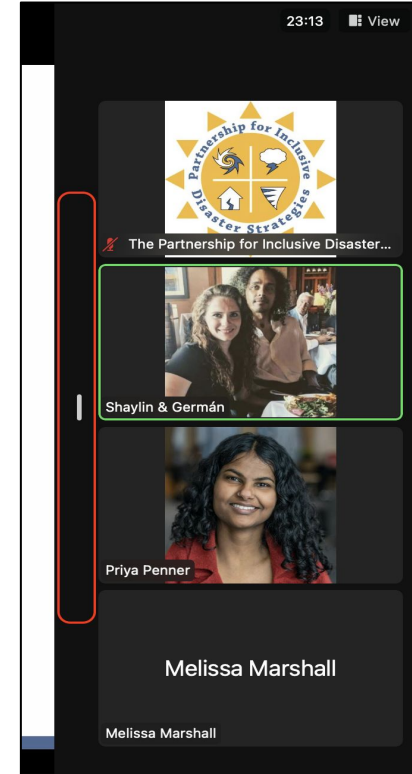
9/25/2025

**The Partnership for
Inclusive Disaster Strategies**

June Isaacson Kailes

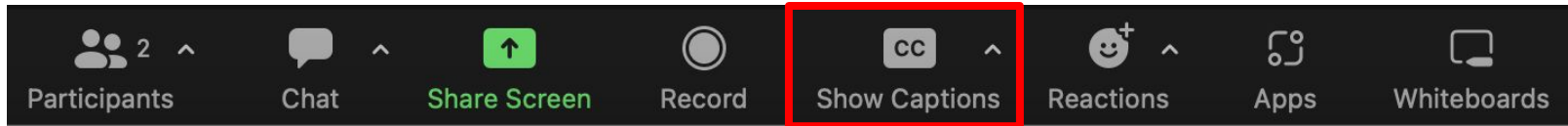
Accessibility for this Presentation

- The ASL interpreters are already spotlighted.
- To adjust the size of the slides and speakers/interpreters in Zoom:
 - Drag the divider, inside in the red vertical rectangle in the screenshot to the right, that separates the speakers/interpreters from the slides.



Accessibility for this Presentation

- To access the CART captions:
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 - Follow link in chat.



- This webinar is recorded. An archive of the webinar will be available.
- You will also receive an accessible slide deck.

Reminders for this Presentation

To Participate:

- Asking questions: Use the Q&A feature
- For technical assistance or to alert us to an issue, type in chat/raise hand.
 - Ex. “slow down please”
- If the chat is not accessible to you, please email your questions to priya@disasterstrategies.org

Welcome and Background

Tools for Emergency Managers and Personal Preparedness

For emergency managers and planners:

- Inclusive Transit Evacuation Guidance and Checklist
 - To be used with the Progress Tracking Documentation
- A Roadmap: Making Transportation Evacuations Real for People with Disabilities

For individual preparedness:

- Individual planning guidance and checklist

**Thank You to
Our Partners**



www.jik.com

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**Adding Value to Service by Increasing Access
Health Care and Disaster Inclusive Practices
Training, Policies, Processes, and Exercises
Actionable Disability Competencies**

Your Action Plan

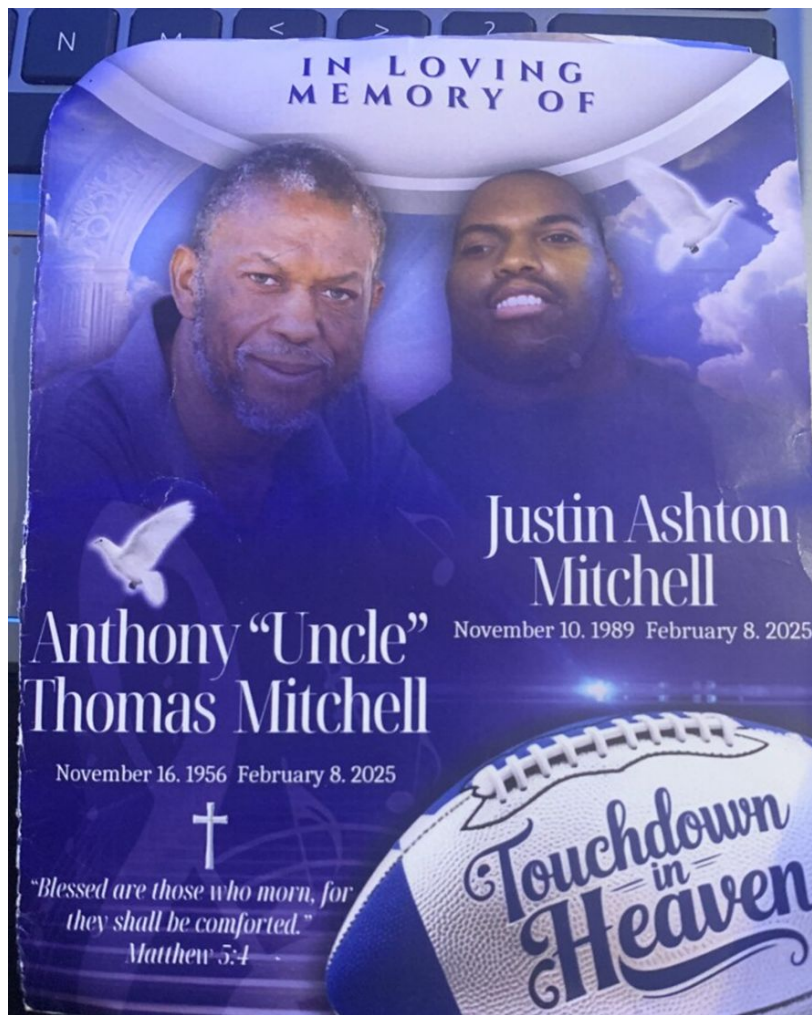
What will you:

- Change
- Continue
- Start
- Stop



Cover

- Roots of the problem
- Lessons and planning gaps
- Future
- New tools and resources



Despite three calls to 911, emergency responders did not reach them before they died as fire consumed their home.

Roots of Problem: Why Many Plans Lack Detail (1/2)

- Vague “plan-to-plan” language: *may, could, might, under development*
- Pressure to avoid admitting response delays
- Priority on reassurance over realistic messaging
- 911 culture assumes immediate help

Roots of Problem: Why Many Plans Lack Detail (2/2)

- Liability fears block clear commitments
- Missing written details despite claimed know-how
- Weak state oversight due to no enforcement authority
- Underinvestment in public education and inclusive messaging

Strong Plans = Specific and Accountable

- Verify capacity and capability with clear statements
- Replace plan-to-plan and boilerplate with action details:
 - Who, what, where, when, why, how
- Pair “under-development” with accountability:
 - Responsible department
 - Position in charge
 - Estimated completion date

Response Time Gaps

- Large-scale events overwhelm systems
- Lack of clear and honest messaging
- Help delayed for hours or days
- Help often from physically closest people

W.A.O.O.O.
is better than
Y.O.Y.O.



Limits of Calling for Help and Need for Personal Plans

- Calls may not connect or may face long delays
- Overwhelmed call volume = slow or no response
- Clear guidance must be developed and repeated
- Even strong evacuation plans shouldn't be a substitute for personal plan

Role of Neighbors and Community

- Neighbors check on each other:
 - Disabled people, older adults, others needing help
- Mutual assistance critical when:
 - Geography, power, communication create barriers
 - Digital alerts miss people
 - Door-to-door warnings are not possible or not heard or understood

Weak:

“Guidance on neighbors helping neighbors should be considered for development.”

Stronger:

“Super-Advisor Consulting, is developing the neighbors helping neighbors' guidance. ***Completion date is xx/xx/xx and will be posted at [insert link].***”

Individual Preparedness Plans

- Generic advice is not realistic guidance
- Complexities of disability often demand more detail
- Overcoming learned helplessness and denial
- Integrating neighbor helping neighbor

4 Stages of Disaster Denial

1. It won't happen here.
2. Even if it happens here, it won't happen to me.
3. Even if it happens to me, it won't be that bad.
4. Even if it's that bad, there's nothing I could have done about it anyway.

- Eric Holdeman, Director of Emergency Management, Seattle's King County

Weak:

“Individuals should develop personal emergency evacuation plans as more people may need transit evacuation help than what will be available.”

Stronger:

“Help with creating personal emergency transit evacuation plans is available from the attached list of community partners **[insert link]**.”

New Transportation Planning Tool

- New how-to guide for individuals preparing for hazards and complexities
- Focus: Realistic, actionable personal evacuation transportation plan
- Building support networks: Identifying people willing to help each other
- Receivers of help: Individuals needing assistance
- Givers of help: Neighbors, friends, family, coworkers

Questions?

“Despite three 911 calls, two homebound disabled men died in the Eaton Fire waiting for rescue”

From the LAist



Weak:

“People needing transit evacuation help should call 911.”

Stronger:

“Individuals needing transit evacuation help can use xxx.xxx.xxxx (phone, text).”

Options for Stronger Plans:

911 operators connect callers in danger to trained staff who can:

- Contact right people in Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and/or dispatch to nearby responders
- Help identify immediate survival options:
 - Call neighbor for help, even if leaving mobility device behind
 - Exit house (wheel, crawl) to reach street for pickup

Future

- Stronger plans answer who, what, where, when, why, how
 - Replace vague text with accountable actions
 - Pair “under development” with department, position, timeline
 - Integrate inclusive risk communication and focus on community resilience

Applied Lessons = Real Lessons Learned

- ONLY when integrated into:
 - Plans and policies
 - Processes and training
 - Testing and analysis
 - Fixes, revisions and updates

Making Transit Evacuation Real

- More than good intentions → requires:
 - Detailed planning
 - Inclusive public and private partnerships
 - Tested, reliable and trustworthy systems
- Success = emergency managers, transit providers and people with disabilities co-design evacuation systems

Doable Change

- Break tasks into doable parts
- Change through team efforts and accountability
- Monitor and sustain through:
 - Staff turnover
 - Administration changes
 - Budget fluctuations

Strong Planning (1/2)

- Link public and private partners in:
 - Planning, testing, evaluating, refining, sustaining
- Strengthen processes, procedures, protocols, policies and training

Strong Planning (2/2)

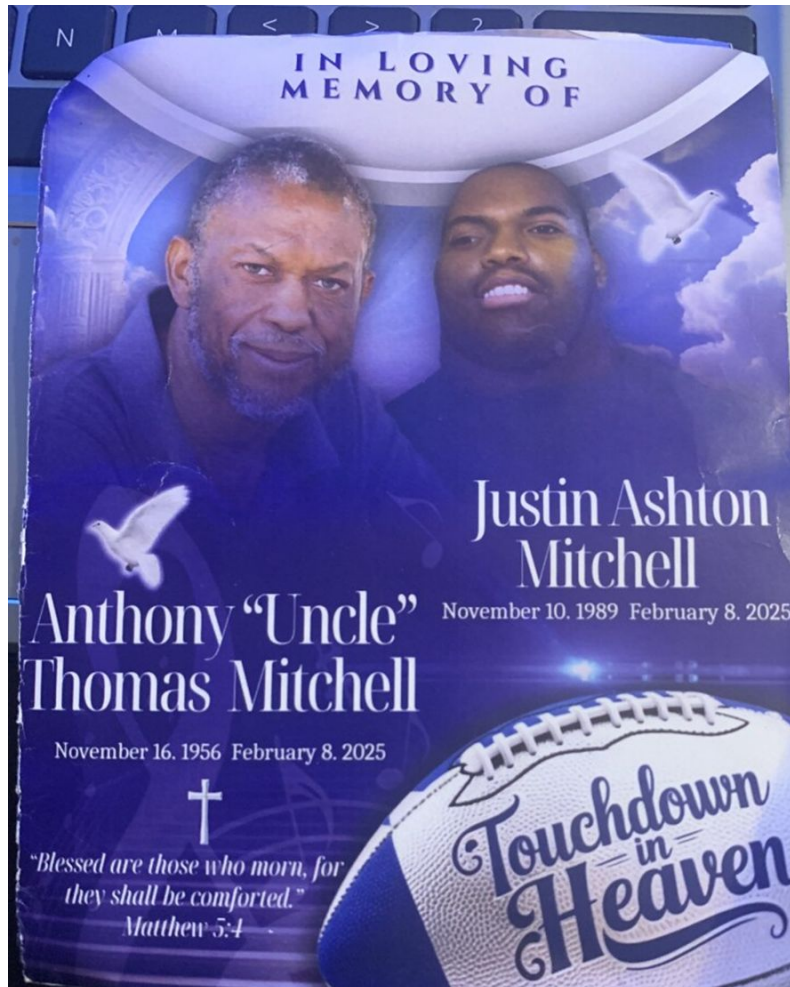
- Replace vague plan-to-plan with specific:
 - Implementable actions
 - Contract tasks
 - “Under-development” paired with:
 - Responsible department and position (who)
 - Estimated completion date (when)

New Transportation Planning Tool

- Details essential elements for safe and accessible evacuations from disaster zones
- For teams developing, maintaining, testing and revising:
 - Emergency transit evacuation services integrated into:
 - Plans, annexes, processes, procedures, protocols
 - Policies, job aids, field guides and training

How to Use Tool + Assessment Tracker

- Create realistic, honest listing of gaps
- Collectively identify opportunities for improvement
- Address gaps, set priorities and project needs
- Identify individuals with responsibility, authority and resources to lead on specific elements
- Problem-solve and track progress
- Sustain process across partners



May the legacy and mandate of Anthony Mitchell Sr. and his son Justin Mitchell ignite efforts to apply these documented lessons, leading to meaningful changes, filling of gaps, and saving lives.

Your Action Plan

What will you:

- Change
- Continue
- Start
- Stop

**“Not to know and do nothing
about it is forgivable.**

**To know and do something
about it is admirable.**

**To know and do nothing
about it is unforgivable.”**

- Source Unknown

Resources to Supplement This Content

Transit Evacuation Resources

- [Transit Evacuation Planning New Tools](#)
- [Making Transit Evacuation Real for All \(2025\) \(Podcast 21 minutes\) \(2025\)](#)
- [Inclusive Evacuation and Transportation. CalOES \(2024\) 4 hour course](#)
- [Developing and Maintaining Emergency Operation Plans, Comprehensive Preparedness Guide \(CPG\) 101. FEMA \(2021\)](#)
- [The Return on Investments in Public Engagement \(2024\)](#)

Trust Resources

- [Building Trust in Emergency Planning and Response Podcast \(21 minutes\)](#) (2025)
 - Note: It takes a few minutes to load.
- [Trust in Emergency Management Dashboard Quiz](#) (2025)
- [Trust versus No Trust Examples in Emergency Management](#) (2025)
- [Your Role in Strengthening Trust in Emergency Management Slides](#) (2025)

Questions?



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Thank you!

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www.disasterstrategies.org

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Individual Preparedness Plans

- Signing up for local alerts and notifications
- Plans to shelter in place or evacuate
- Plans for power outages
- Labeling equipment
- Develop helper list – check on and help each other
- Develop communications plans
- Collect critical documents

Emergency Registries for People with Access and Functional Needs

- What is a Registry?
- Emergency Registry Assessment Tool
- Flowchart: Deciding to Use an Access and Functional Needs Emergency Registry
- Stakeholder Opinions of Registries
- Registry Websites
- Papers, Presentations, Webinars, Resources

Registry Resources

- [Beyond Registries: Better Solutions For People With Disabilities \(2023\)](#)
- Emergency Registries: A Misleading, Harmful & Non-Inclusive Fix 9/8 and 10/13 2022
 - [Part 1](#)
 - [Part 2](#)
- [Redirecting Emergency Registries: Community Driven Solutions](#)