



**Building Partnerships Means  
Building Trust**  
The George R Brown Convention Center  
Mega-Shelter

**American Red Cross**

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## Objectives

- Recap timeline and decision points for mega-shelter planning and operations
- Review long term shelter needs, plans and ramifications
- Develop understanding of shelter transition planning and rehousing solutions and timeline

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## Introduction

Hurricane Harvey hit Texas on Aug 25. First >Cat 3 storm in more than a decade on US soil

- Hurricane Katrina evacuation- LA to Houston
- Hurricane Rita Houston evacuation
- Evacuations vs Shelter In Place



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## Mega Shelter Planning

- Non conventional sheltering locations
- Shelter functions as a small city
- Opened by local authorities
- Magnet for the community
- Unified command between multiple agencies
- Resources: Mega Shelter Planning Guide on FEMA's website



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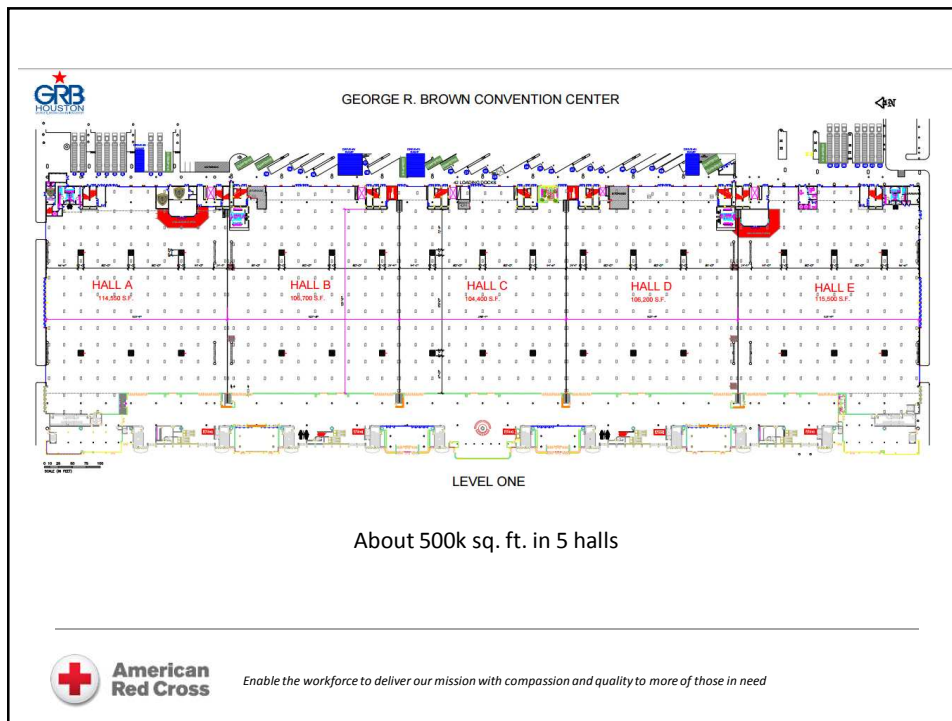
## The George R Brown Story

- Planning assumptions
- Set Up and Facility Space
- Multi Agency Coordination and Responsibilities
- Opening and Receiving Clients
- Client Needs and Donations Management
- Workforce and Volunteer Management



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## Receiving and Registration



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## Donation Management



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## Volunteer Management



- Workforce Planning was Key
- Volunteer Houston opened a Volunteer Reception Center
- Red Cross opened a Staff Processing Center
- Successes
- Challenges



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## Command & Logistics

- Unified Command Center
- Briefing Room
- Managing the press
- Agency Headquarters
- Warehousing Operations
- Access control and wrist bands



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## Long Term Shelter Planning

- Shelter Population begins to fall after storm moves on late Aug 29<sup>th</sup> Tuesday
- Determination begins for long term shelter and housing planning
- George R Brown Convention Center becomes an important economic piece of Houston Recovery
- There are still several thousand individuals in George R Brown

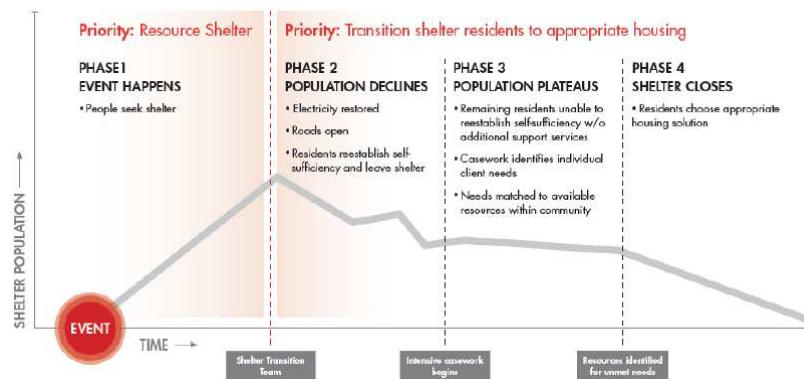


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Figure 2: Shelter Transition Model Graphic

### Phases of Shelter Operations



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## Rapid Re-housing

- Houston has a history with hurricanes and recovery
- Active Housing Department and Coalition for Homelessness
- Engagement of FEMA and HUD federal partners early
- Convention Center availability
- Housing stock availability



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## Shelter Movement: Decision Support

- Decline in population
- George R Brown availability
- Move to smaller shelters



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## Long Term Ramifications

- Community Planning: most shelters plan for a small percentage of community members. What happens when all community members need to arrive at the shelter due to rescues or lack of transportation/hotel rooms etc
- Facility Agreements and Multi-Agency Coordination: mega shelters should be managed like a small city. This takes more coordination from multiple agencies
- Shelter Transition and Housing: Consideration of the rise in homelessness and the lack of local housing stock is key. Great partners in FEMA, HUD and Continuums of Care for planning and recovery



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## Resources

1. Mega Shelter Planning Guide by American Red Cross and International Association of Venue Managers
  1. <https://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/disasterhousing/mspg.pdf>
2. Shelter Field Guide (and Training) by American Red Cross and FEMA
  1. [http://www.nationalmasscarestrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Shelter-Field-Guide-508\\_f3.pdf](http://www.nationalmasscarestrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Shelter-Field-Guide-508_f3.pdf)



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## Questions and Feedback



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