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My Storm: Managing the Recovery of New Orleans in the Wake of Katrina (The City in the Twenty-First Century)

Edward J. Blakely

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Edward J. Blakely : My Storm: Managing the Recovery of New Orleans in the Wake of Katrina (The City in the Twenty-First Century) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised My Storm: Managing the Recovery of New Orleans in the Wake of Katrina (The City in the Twenty-First Century):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Doing What is needed, but not really wanted.By August CA

somewhat controversial book of ideas on how to handle the situation after Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans. Reals flaws in government decisions like removing swamp/ mangrove land and the slow response and red tape of government. Ideas that make sense, but not easily accepted by people. 1 of 3 people found the following review helpful. My Storm by Edward J Blakely By Robert Reviewer Wow! A breath of fresh air when an American calls it like it is. It seems racism is alive and well in the land of the free. Why is it that the poor and the black in America were treated the way they were in New Orleans after Katrina? A wonderful social commentary full of constraint, calmness and and sense of humanity. A must for anyone trying to create workable urban places where people have a chance to grow and live meaningful lives anywhere on the planet. Ed keep up the fight and please write more books about your experiances and insights about the human condition. Thank you for recomending this great book and making it available to the world. 5 of 8 people found the following review helpful. A valuable book on disaster recovery By Alexander E. Kalamaros My Storm is the personal account of Dr. Ed Blakely, who managed the recovery effort in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina. Dr. Blakely provides us his report from his perspective as a team leader, and that is what makes this book so valuable. His narrative dispels the notion that any single individual is alone capable of lifting up the entire city. The recovery chief is much more a quarterback than a czar. Chapter 14 is the most important, which explains the mix of science, luck and politics that still renders the city vulnerable to a potential future failure of the levees. In doing so, Dr. Blakely recognizes his responsibilities as a planner and public servant and alerts us all to this particular example of the inadequate investment in infrastructure that is a broader, looming problem nationwide. Despite a raft of undeservedly harsh criticism, Dr. Blakely has chosen to provide a balanced perspective of both the successes and failures of his tenure. He thoughtfully considers viewpoints other than his own, and thus sets a fine example for young professionals seeking to learn about maintaining positive leadership in the face of public anger, some misdirected, however genuine. The text is an engaging read that demonstrates the concern and diligence needed to carry out his assignment. I enjoyed hearing about how Dr. Blakely rode around storm damaged areas on a bicycle, and I remembered how I rode my bike and discovered neighborhoods as a kid in much the same way. I learned something from reading this book and I recommend it highly. I have purchased an additional copy to donate to my local public library to share with others.

Edward J. Blakely has been called upon to help rebuild after some of the worst disasters in recent American history, from the San Francisco Bay Area's 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake to the September 11 attacks in New York. Yet none of these jobs compared to the challenges he faced in his appointment by New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin as Director of the Office of Recovery and Development Administration following Hurricane Katrina. In Katrina's wake, New Orleans and the Gulf Coast suffered a disaster of enormous proportions. Millions of pounds of water crushed the basic infrastructure of the city. A land area six times the size of Manhattan was flooded, destroying 200,000 homes and leaving most of New Orleans under water for 57 days. No American city had sustained that amount of destruction since the Civil War. But beneath the statistics lies a deeper truth: New Orleans had been in trouble well before the first levee broke, plagued with a declining population, crumbling infrastructure, ineffective government, and a failed school system. Katrina only made these existing problems worse. To Blakely, the challenge was not only to repair physical damage but also to reshape a city with a broken economy and a racially divided, socially fractured community. My Storm is a firsthand account of a critical sixteen months in the post-Katrina recovery process. It tells the story of Blakely's endeavor to transform the shell of a cherished American city into a city that could not only survive but thrive. He considers the recovery effort's successes and failures, candidly assessing the challenges at hand and the work done admitting that he sometimes stumbled, especially in managing press relations. For Blakely, the story of the post-Katrina recovery contains lessons for all current and would-be planners and policy makers. It is, perhaps, a cautionary tale.

About the Author Edward J. Blakely is Professor of Urban and Regional Planning Policy and Director of the Planning Research Centre at the University of Sydney, Australia. He is the author of four books and more than 100 scholarly articles. His publications include *Separate Societies: Poverty and Inequality in U.S. Cities* and *Planning Local Economic Development: Theory and Practice*. Henry Cisneros is former United States Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.