Resilience is one of the biggest buzzwords in planning right now, especially in disaster preparedness. There is very little consensus, however, on what it means to be resilient and how planners can and should promote resilience in their practice. Dr. Taylor proposes a definition of resilience that is practical and broadly applicable by practicing planners: the capacity to strategically prepare for unexpected future risks while managing avoidable ones. He will discuss the strengths and limitations of this definition in the social, economic, environmental, and administrative domains and argue that resilience promotion constitutes a new urban and regional planning paradigm that is distinct from conventional practice.

Dr. Zack Taylor is Assistant Professor in the Dept. of Political Science and Director of the Centre for Urban Policy and Local Governance at the University of Western Ontario, and a non-practicing Registered Professional Planner in Ontario. His research focuses on Canadian and international urban and regional planning and governance issues. As a researcher and research director at the Neptis Foundation in the mid-2000s he managed and executed several substantial research projects on urban development issues in the Greater Golden Horseshoe. His Neptis report Shaping the Toronto Region (2008) won a national award for research excellence from the Canadian Institute of Planners. He has served on the Government of Ontario’s Growth Plan Implementation Advisory Group.

What is Resilience? How can we plan for it?

MARCH 5
ZACK TAYLOR