Forming a Recovery Team Guide
COVID-19 Pandemic

The Colorado Resiliency Office is gathering and sharing resources, stories, and best practices of community and economic recovery throughout the pandemic. This document will guide your community through the basic steps necessary for establishing a community recovery and resiliency team. Research has shown that communities that engage in robust and inclusive planning processes after disasters tend to recover more quickly and effectively than those that do not.

The following outlines three steps to forming a recovery and resiliency team for your community.

Read more:

CRRC Local Government Guide to Recovery

"Regain Control: Establish an Economic Recovery Team" (Tenacity Partners)

"Form a Collaborative Planning Team," from FEMA's *Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning Guide for Local Governments*

Step 1: Assemble a Core Recovery and Resiliency Team

The first step to creating a recovery plan or strategy is to establish a core recovery and resiliency team. This team will commit time to gathering diverse stakeholders from across the community and engage them in conversations to solve problems, innovate, and adapt to help the community to rebound and come back stronger.

The team should be led by a ***local recovery coordinator***, likely a local government official or leader from a trusted regional council of government or other organization. This person (or persons) should be able to commit the time necessary to organize the team and serve as its primary point of contact with local elected officials as well as state, federal, and non-profit partners. In many cases, this coordinator will be an existing staff person that is assigned to take on this responsibility.

Local Recovery and Resiliency Team Stakeholders
These core team members will not be the only voices in the recovery planning process. Rather, they are individuals who have the time and willingness to engage on a regular basis and serve as a point of contact and ambassador to their industries, constituencies, and/or communities. The members of the core recovery and resiliency team should be a diverse group from different parts of the community like:

- Elected officials
- Local government staff
- Emergency managers
- Public health officials and experts
- Economic development professionals
- Local business owners and staff
- Chamber of commerce representatives
- Local and regional non-profit organizations
- State partners
- Technical experts

Step 2: Kickoff to Define the Role and Purpose of the Recovery and Resiliency Team

Once assembled, the recovery and resiliency team should have a kickoff meeting focused on defining the role of the team and its purpose.

The following are questions that might guide the team's kickoff meeting and inform their recovery plan or strategy:

- What is the purpose of the recovery and resiliency team?
- How will the team be organized and communicate to each other and the public?

Besides these fundamental questions, some other key issues that the core recovery and resiliency team might discuss at their kickoff meeting are:

- What is the team's vision for the community coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic?
- What community values must be incorporated into the recovery process?
- What are the most pressing shocks and stresses facing our community due to the pandemic? How would we prioritize them?

Read more:

Knowledgebase Collection: Online Public Engagement (American Planning Association)

Public Engagement in Recovery Planning (American Planning Association and FEMA)

Best Practices for Engagement in the Time of COVID (Salt Lake City Civic Engagement Team)

COVID-19 Public Participation Resources (International Association for Public Participation).

Step 3: Create a Space for Conversations, Problem Solving, and Planning

The unprecedented scale and impact of the Coronavirus will require robust collaboration between businesses, non-profits, government, and the public to develop new ideas and policies for recovery — there is no "one-size-fits-all" solution. An important task for the recovery and resiliency team is to create a space for dynamic conversations, planning, and problem solving. How can you safely and effectively engage each other, and the public, during a pandemic?

Luckily we now have an array of tools and best-practices for online collaboration and public participation (see additional resources below). While different communities will engage their stakeholders in different ways, here are a few best-practice principles to keep in mind:

Work for transparency and accountability.
Transparency and accountability are important characteristics of any public planning process. Make sure to clearly communicate the formation of your community's recovery and resiliency team and designate a point-of-contact for the public. The team should create an online space for sharing items like meeting agendas and minutes, likely hosted on the local government's website. Some communities record their meetings and make them available for later viewing.

Allow for both real-time and electronic engagement.
Synchronous meetings online, using a software like Microsoft Teams or Google Hangouts, allow for communities to form and problem-solving to occur in real-time. Asynchronous engagement – using technologies like discussion threads, surveys, polls, and collaborative documents – allow stakeholders the time and flexibility they need to engage most effectively. Using a mix of both creates the greatest opportunity for dynamic and robust engagement.

Recognize that stakeholders have different engagement capacities and needs.
It is important to recognize that some stakeholders may not have the technical skills or resources necessary to engage online. The recovery and resiliency team should seek representatives of these groups to participate in the recovery process, whether through its own membership or through targeted stakeholder outreach.

Evaluative Questions

Does the team include representatives from diverse stakeholders in community and economic recovery? What voices are missing?

Is the size of your team manageable? It is important that you include enough members to be diverse but limit the size to keep things manageable.

Remember, the core team should be only part of your engagement strategy. You can engage additional individuals and groups at specific points in the planning process and as their capacity allows. What is your strategy for engaging these communities?

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Local Recovery Coordinator(s) and Team Lead

Title or Position	Name of Holder	Contact Information	Additional Information

Local Recovery and Resilience Team Stakeholders

Name	Title or Position	Organization or Business	Contact Information	Additional Information