

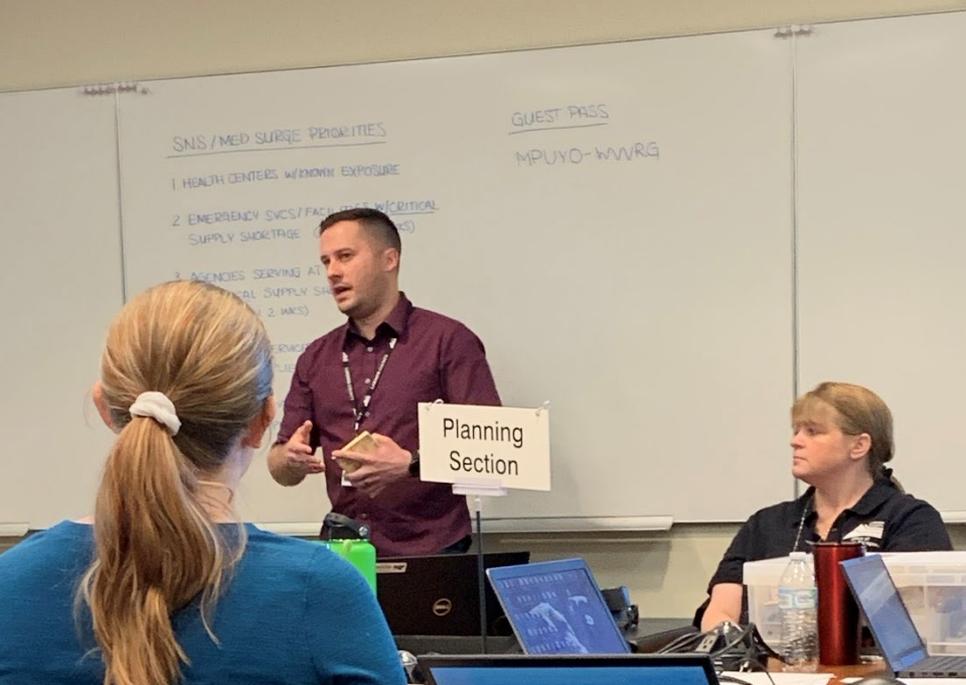
# COVID-19 LONG-TERM RECOVERY PLAN

*This report was developed to identify unmet community needs resulting from the current pandemic and to define a long-term path forward towards community recovery.*

December 1, 2020



LARIMER  
RECOVERY  
COLLABORATIVE



Plan photos provided by Larimer County, the City of Fort Collins, and Synergy Disaster Recovery

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# Executive Summary

## The Road to Recovery



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*We now begin civilization's most significant recovery effort since the end of World War II. This recovery is unique in that it is occurring during the on-going pandemic response. In some ways, this is uncharted territory. However, lessons learned from the two most recent disasters will aid in navigating this vast effort.*

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Larimer County is no stranger to disasters. In the last decade, residents of Larimer County have experienced two of the worst natural disasters in our county's history with the High Park Fire in 2012 and the 2013 Floods. Recovery for both of those disasters continues today.

Recovery from the pandemic, like that of previous disasters will be a continuous process for years to come.

The purpose of this plan is to document the community's collective unmet recovery needs caused by the on-going pandemic.

As we are still in the midst of this global disaster, it is expected that these needs will continue to evolve as our communities learn to react and adapt.

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# Background

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# About this Document



This [COVID-19 Long-Term Recovery Plan](#) was developed in 2020, throughout the summer and fall of the pandemic event. For the sake of this document, August 31, 2020 was considered the end date for these planning efforts.

It is important to stress that the pandemic is still on-going and this plan is only a snapshot of recovery efforts at the time of this plan's writing.

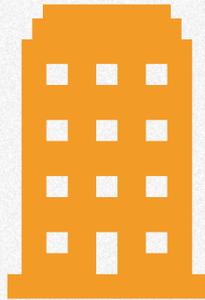
As the world and Larimer County are still responding to this on-going disaster, it is expected that long-term recovery planning efforts will continue to evolve over the course of this pandemic event.

This document is organized into the following chapters:

- ▶ Background on the COVID-19 event
- ▶ Larimer County's recovery efforts to date
- ▶ Event impacts and unmet needs across the three Focus Areas of this plan
- ▶ Identified unmet needs relating to the pandemic
- ▶ Lessons learned thus far from the events that have transpired
- ▶ Next steps going forward for continued recovery
- ▶ Plan references
- ▶ Afterword

Additionally, some sections of this plan have been structured around three broad Areas of Focus, built across sixteen individual community sectors detailed on the following page.

# About this Document



**Government, Education, & Policy** is an Area of Focus comprised of the following community sectors:

- ▶ Educational Systems
- ▶ Infrastructure, Connectivity, & Transportation
- ▶ County Operations & Programs



**Workforce, Small Business, & Economic Development** is an Area of Focus comprised of the following community sectors:

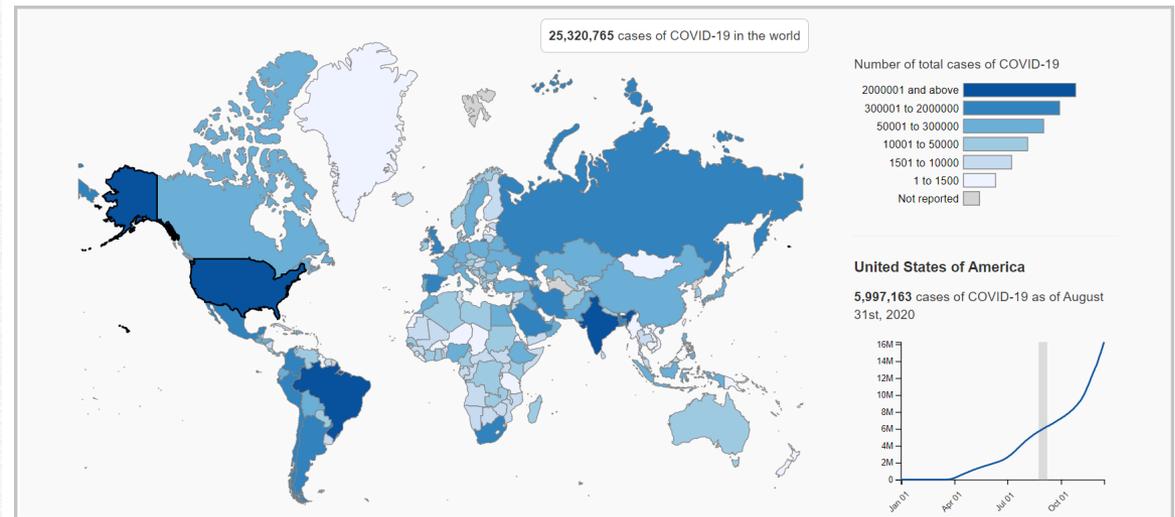
- ▶ Workforce & Employment
- ▶ Small & Mainstreet Business
- ▶ Primary Employers
- ▶ Hospitality, Visitor Experience, & Outdoor Recreation
- ▶ Creative Industries
- ▶ Agriculture & Farming
- ▶ Nonprofit Support



**Community Support Services** is an Area of Focus comprised of the following community sectors:

- ▶ Older Adult Services
- ▶ Housing Stability & Homelessness
- ▶ Early Learning & Childcare
- ▶ Voluntary Agencies & Faith-Based Organizations
- ▶ Food & Essential Needs
- ▶ Behavioral & Physical Health / Healthcare Access

# Event Narrative



Data Source: European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control

COVID-19 is caused by infection with a new coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2. As of August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020:

- ▶ World-wide there have been over 840,000 deaths resulting from over 25 million confirmed cases of the virus.
- ▶ There have been almost six million reported cases within the United States, resulting in over 183,000 deaths.
- ▶ Colorado has experienced over 57,000 cases, tallying 1,849 deaths.
- ▶ Larimer County has endured 1,938 cases of COVID-19 and 42 deaths across the community, at this moment in time.

As Larimer County enters the **winter and flu seasons**, there is much uncertainty as to how this disaster event will ultimately transpire. There is currently **no vaccine** available and clinical trials are underway.

**The biggest challenge caused by COVID-19 is the fact that communities have been forced to respond, prepare, and recover concurrently during this on-going active event.**

# Event Narrative



During this pandemic, Colorado is working to make life as sustainable as possible, while ensuring Coloradoans do not surpass our public health and health care capacities.

Colorado's dial framework standardizes different levels of "openness" at the county level. It is a tool for counties to use to allow communities to balance, to the greatest extent possible, controlling the virus with our social and economic needs.

The dial includes five levels, from least to most restrictive, based off of three statewide metrics. Details for each level outline specific metrics (cases, positivity, and hospitalizations) and how many people can participate in various activities at one time.

**Protect Our Neighbors:** Local public health agencies are able to contain



surges in cases and outbreaks through testing, case investigation, contact tracing, isolation, quarantine, site-specific closures, and enforcement of public health orders.

**Safer at Home 1 - Cautious:** This is less restrictive than Safer at Home Level 2, for counties with low virus transmission but that have not yet achieved Protect Our Neighbors.

**Safer at Home 2 - Concern:** The baseline. While we are all still safer at home, we are also able to practice greater social distancing in our great outdoors than in confined indoor spaces.

**Safer at Home 3 - High Risk:** This is more restrictive than Safer at Home Level 2, for counties experiencing increases in the metrics. Action is needed, but Stay at Home may not be warranted.

**Stay at Home:** Everyone is required to stay at home except for grocery shopping, exercise and necessary activities. Only critical businesses are open.

As of August 31<sup>st</sup>, Larimer County is designated as **Safer at Home 1 – Cautious**. Its self-reported risk score from the Larimer County COVID-19 Dashboard shows a present 'High' risk score.

# Timeline

## March 2020

- 5<sup>th</sup>** – First two Colorado cases
- 10<sup>th</sup>** – State emergency declaration
- 12<sup>th</sup>** – Major county schools suspend in-person learning
- 17<sup>th</sup>** – State orders closure of dine-in services
- 18<sup>th</sup>** – State restricts gatherings to ten persons
- 19<sup>th</sup>** – State orders closure of non-essential businesses
- 25<sup>th</sup>** – County Stay-at-Home order
- 27<sup>th</sup>** – State Stay-at-Home order
- 28<sup>th</sup>** – Federal emergency declaration for CO

## April 2020

- 1<sup>st</sup>** – State suspends in-person learning
- 3<sup>rd</sup>** – Governor advises use of masks in public
- 20<sup>th</sup>** – Safer-at-Home plan outline
- 22<sup>nd</sup>** – CDC releases reopening guidelines
- 27<sup>th</sup>** – Phased opening of businesses begin

## May 2020

- 1<sup>st</sup>** – Continued opening of businesses / local mask mandates begin
- 18<sup>th</sup>** – County submits variance request to state
- 19<sup>th</sup>** – County relaxes some mask restrictions, but some municipalities remain unchanged
- 23<sup>rd</sup>** – County receives state approval to relax restrictions

## June 2020

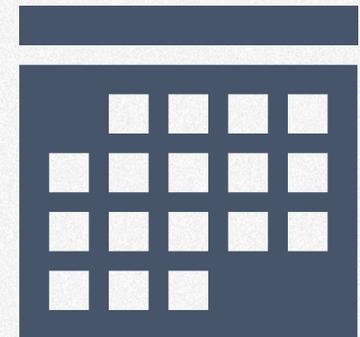
- 18<sup>th</sup>** – Bars reopening at limited capacity
- 30<sup>th</sup>** – Bars re-closed

## July 2020

- 16<sup>th</sup>** – State mask mandate
- 27<sup>th</sup>** – Major schools announce hybrid learning models for the fall

## August 2020

- 4<sup>th</sup>** – Major schools announce 100% remote learning to start school year

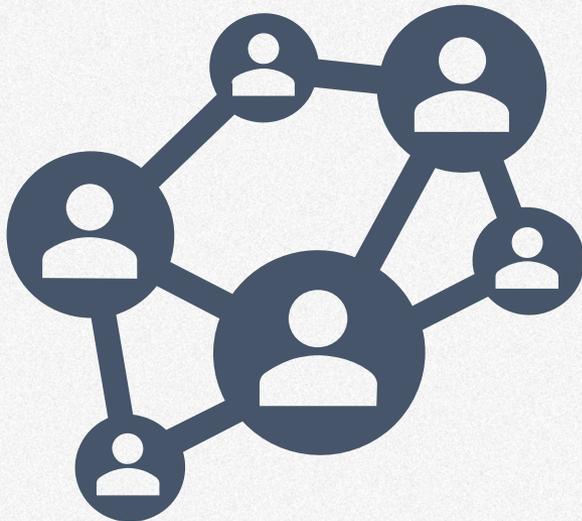


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# Critical Disruptions

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted society in many ways. Some of these disruptions were expected results of the event, while **others came unexpectedly** and unraveled over the course of this disaster thus far.

All sectors detailed in this document have experienced critical interruptions caused by the COVID-19 event. All of these disruptions have subsequently produced their own **cascading impacts** felt across the community, which are detailed on the following pages.



Major event impacts include:

- ▶ The complete and then partial shut-downs of society
- ▶ The resulting economic impacts from these shut-downs
- ▶ The need to implement social distancing requirements
- ▶ The inability for all systems and services to operate normally
- ▶ Supply chain disruptions and cascading effects on resources
- ▶ The closure of in-person school and childcare
- ▶ Disproportionate effect on the Immigrant and Latinx communities

# Cascading Effects

- ▶ The lack of access for those without virtual connectivity and resources.
- ▶ The increased community divide that has now associated itself with following public health guidelines.
- ▶ The challenges associated with safely reopening.
- ▶ The long-term impacts of postponed preventative health measures.



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## *The following cascading impacts have affected the community as a whole:*

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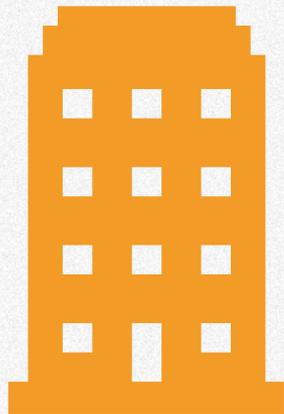
- ▶ The disproportionate impacts of both the pandemic event and recovery efforts on marginalized and underserved communities.
- ▶ The reinforcement of existing disparities across communities of color and those economically marginalized.
- ▶ Women leaving the workforce at a disproportionate factor (x4) compared to men.
- ▶ The resulting impacts from the lack of school-aged care and childcare (workforce, education).
- ▶ The loss of revenue for businesses, service providers, and other organizations.
- ▶ The complications brought by necessary quarantines.
- ▶ The loss of transportation alternatives.
- ▶ The need for systems and services to pivot to online / virtual solutions.
- ▶ The impacts to the community's behavioral health, caused by stress and anxiety from the event.
- ▶ The loss of individual economic security, food security, essential needs, and health security.
- ▶ The resulting impacts from these losses to the community, economy, and society as a whole.
- ▶ The uncertainty regarding long-term COVID-19 health impacts and in some cases a lack of recovery from the virus.
- ▶ COVID 'fatigue' and its effects on compliance with health orders
- ▶ The loss of volunteers and staff across all sectors.
- ▶ Impacts to families that depend on services no longer available.

# Cascading Effects

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*Additional cascading impacts relevant to Government, Education, & Policy include :*

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- ▶ An increasing distrust in government will increase difficulties in communicating services to the community.
- ▶ The impacts to quality of education.
- ▶ Students falling behind in school.
- ▶ The increasing gap in education for students of color and low-income students, due to loss of in-person instruction.
- ▶ The lack of access to secondary school services.
- ▶ Social distancing challenges on facilities and processes.
- ▶ The need for employees to work from home.
- ▶ The increased jail population due to forced changes in programming.
- ▶ The need to react to changing community patterns.
- ▶ The negative impacts to staffing levels, employee health, and morale.
- ▶ Reduced access to services for those lacking access to internet and technology.
- ▶ The need to adapt all services to ensure continued community support.
- ▶ The reduction of in-person services and reduced capacity.
- ▶ The record levels of park visitation and resulting negative impacts.
- ▶ Changes to public transportation ridership levels.
- ▶ The need to provide additional right of way access to businesses.
- ▶ Uncertainty relating to future revenue changes.

# Cascading Effects



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## *Additional cascading impacts relevant to Workforce, Small Business, & Economic Development include :*

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- ▶ Pandemic served as a change accelerator for the entire economy
- ▶ Requires re-training of the workforce to meet the needs of the new economy
- ▶ The shift to tele-work and resulting impacts to those jobs that require in-person duties
- ▶ The need to enact Stay at Home orders and the resulting challenges to society
- ▶ The pivot to internet dependency and challenges this presented to some businesses
- ▶ The challenges encountered relating to food security and the need to keep these community lifelines operational
- ▶ The need to support foreign-born workers, especially in the service industry, who are not eligible for government relief funds
- ▶ The need to incentivize individuals to return to supporting local businesses
- ▶ The economic interconnections between various workforces

# Cascading Effects



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*Additional cascading impacts relevant to Community Support Services include :*

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- ▶ Lack of access to critical services and care
- ▶ Lack of in-person services and reduced capacity
- ▶ The impacts to quality of healthcare and behavioral health support
- ▶ Postponement of regular and preventative healthcare and expected rise in future health conditions
- ▶ The magnification of pre-existing childcare workforce shortages
- ▶ Increased severity of child protection referrals, and a reduction in number of reporters/protective factors for children
- ▶ Diminished capacity of homeless shelters due to distancing requirements
- ▶ Loss of access to food for children with the connection between schools and meal provision
- ▶ Re-openings increase risk to older adults
- ▶ Older adult isolation
- ▶ Increases in elder abuse and domestic violence
- ▶ Economically-forced closures to service providers
- ▶ Community needs are expected to grow, possibly in unknown ways due to future effects

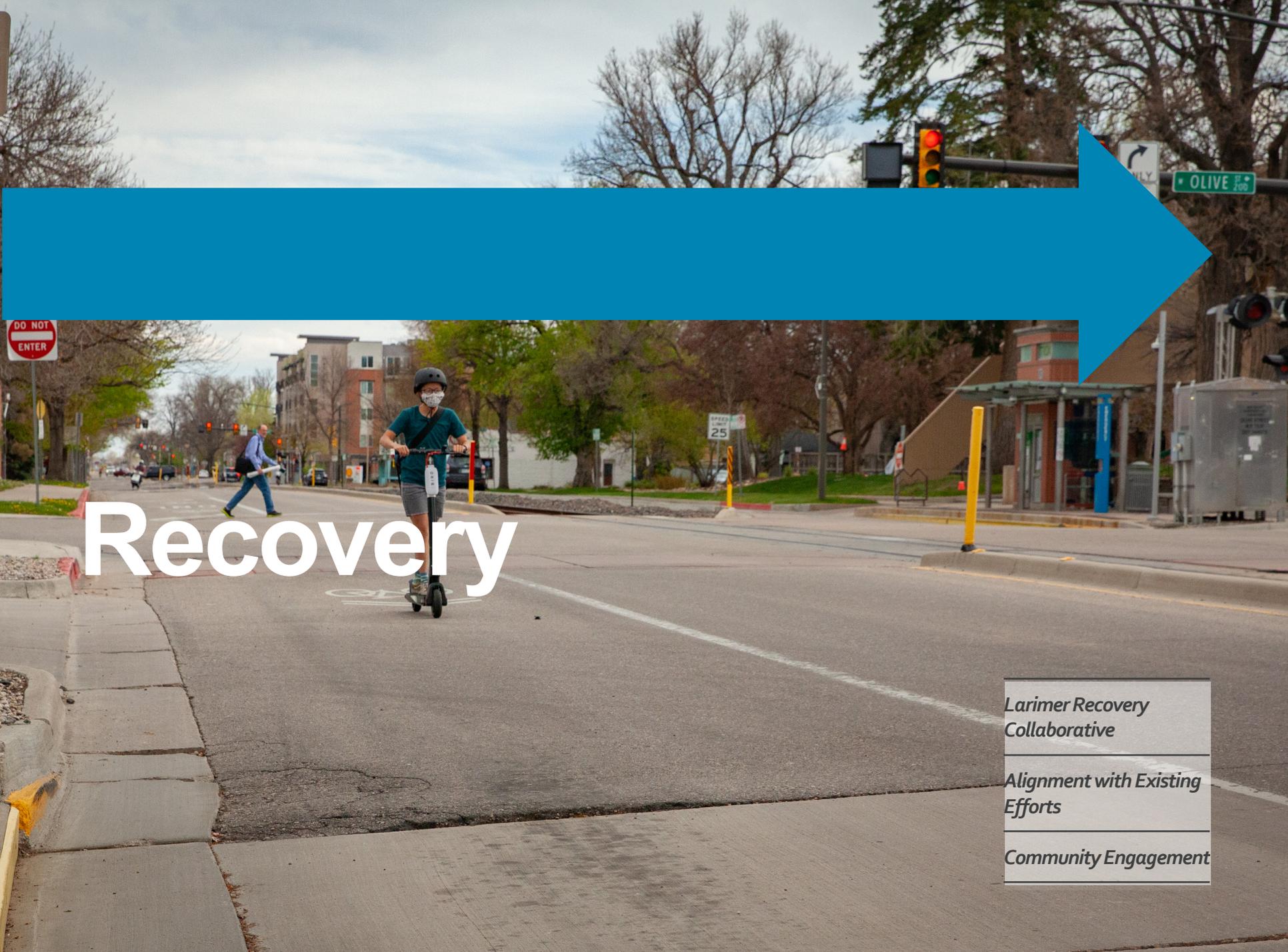
# On-going Preparedness

Larimer County is no stranger to disaster events and as a result is well prepared to respond to and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Examples of this community preparedness include:



- ▶ As a result of the 2013 floods, the [Long-Term Recovery Group](#) was formed. Due to the scope of this event, the group expanded beyond the traditional model. This expansion resulted in the [Larimer Recovery Collaborative](#), which will use relationships, experience and collective knowledge to help Larimer County recover from this pandemic event.
- ▶ The [Larimer Connects Program](#) is a program focused on building capacity in the form of preparedness, resilience, and self sustainability at the most grassroots level. This program has built community connections, allowing neighbors to help neighbors, in some of our rural areas of the county. One area established a food pantry that continues to be utilized today.
- ▶ [Existing working groups](#) across and within community sectors have been leveraged to assist with long-term recovery efforts. Examples of some of these groups include: VOAD, the Regional Economic Development Partnership, the United Way, and the Bohemian Foundation.
- ▶ Larimer County regularly trains with Health and Medical personnel, leading to a coordinated response to the pandemic amongst partners.
- ▶ [Larimer County Department of Health and Environment](#) has activated Points of Dispensing and has practiced their plans regularly in both exercises and real events which led to better outcomes for testing and resource management.



# Recovery

*Larimer Recovery  
Collaborative*

*Alignment with Existing  
Efforts*

*Community Engagement*

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# Larimer Recovery Collaborative

Long-term recovery groups come together after a disaster to help people rebuild and recover. Larimer County previously formed such groups following the 2013 floods and High Park Wildfire.

**We need that kind of collaboration again, but on a much larger scale.**

The pandemic is different in **magnitude and scope** than other natural disasters, which tend to have a defined geographical area and timeline. This pandemic is **impacting everyone continually**. It even impacts the agencies and people we tend to lean on for disaster relief.

Pandemic recovery does not begin after the event is over.

It is closely interwoven in our ongoing response as we attempt to learn to live with the virus while managing the waves of infections.

**It was immediately clear that Larimer County needed to come together as a community to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. Thankfully, the Larimer County region knows how to work together.**

The Larimer Recovery Collaborative (LRC) was formed through collaboration between municipalities, agencies, Larimer County departments and offices, as well as community recovery groups.

The LRC's mission is to coordinate **short-term and long-term** recovery efforts while maximizing all available resources and not duplicating efforts. This organization represents Larimer County as a region, not just Larimer County the government.

To organize our community's resources and track unmet needs, the LRC split themselves into three cross-sector focus areas: 1) **Workforce & Business Services**, 2) **Government, Education, & Policy**, and 3) **Community Support Services**. These are regional task force teams actively working and communicating in virtual meetings under those focus areas to identify needs and innovative solutions or funding sources.

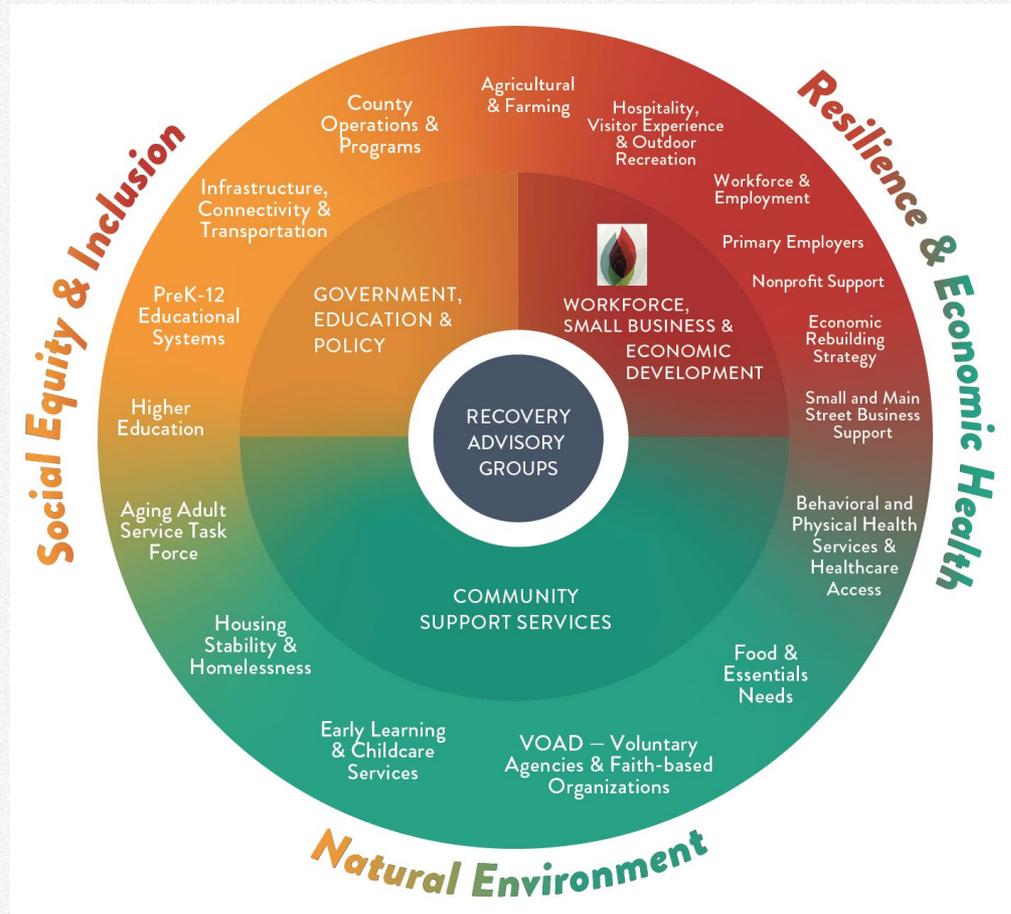
**The best recovery plans are actually resilience plans.** It's evident the system that was in place before this disaster was not working well for everyone in our community. As with many natural disasters, some members of our community were hit harder by COVID-19 than others.

We will rebuild and adjust our systems, utilizing the triple bottom line approach, in a way that **ensures ALL Larimer County** residents are better prepared to survive another disaster in the future.

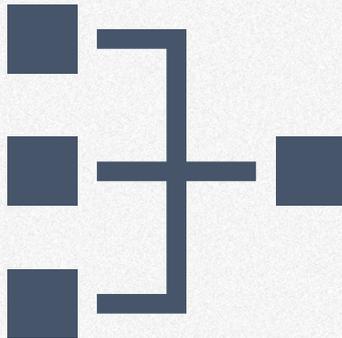
# Larimer Recovery Collaborative

The LRC has three core values in their mission to “build back better and stronger.” Those core values are 1) [Social Equity and Inclusion](#), 2) [Natural Environment](#), and 3) [Economic Health & Resilience](#).

The LRC’s goal is to incorporate these values into all strategies and decisions and identify ways of improving systems. The LRC formed a community board to engage the community members who were most impacted to integrate their perspective and experience into the recovery plan as well as [address equity issues, language barriers and other social vulnerabilities](#) which may hinder recovery. This plan will highlight the assets and strengths of this community. As systems are redesigned, we will lean on and incorporate their expertise, leadership abilities, and contributions.



# Alignment with Existing Efforts



A number of existing plans and resources contributed to the development of this plan. A full list is included in the Reference chapter.

This [integration was imperative](#) to ensuring a robust plan for long-term recovery from the COVID-19 event. This also ensured that [no strategic conflicts](#) exist or were created as part of this planning process.

Among the numerous innovative and ambitious plans Larimer County has, the [underlying foundation is sustainability](#), or the ability to maintain at a certain level. The success of the plans depends upon creating sustainable partnerships, programs, social and economic development, and community improvements which must withstand or adapt to the influences of transformation.

[Transformation](#) comes in various forms which can shift priorities and programs. In extreme cases, disasters also present this opportunity.

As transformations occur in the local government, private, and nonprofit sectors, the work that was foremost on the list for previous leadership may be put to the side or abandoned entirely for a new idea or initiative. While new ideas are necessary for evolution, the progress lost during transformations of any kind affects sustainability.

Creating successful partnerships and programs relies on the current level of work continuing, maintaining valuable data, and fostering community support. The plans across Larimer County focus on strengthening this sustainability, to reinforce a solid base on which to build new plans, tackle new initiatives, and [make progress in achieving community-wide goals](#).

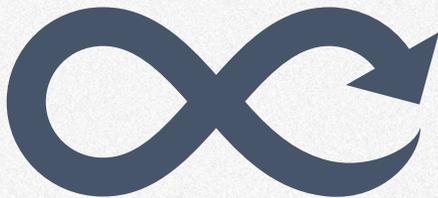
As Larimer County begins recovery from the devastating Cameron Peak and East Troublesome wildfires it is expected that those efforts will be aligned with the [Larimer Recovery Collaborative](#).

# Community Engagement

Through the end of August 2020 the Larimer Recovery Collaborative coordinated numerous community engagement activities. Support from existing working groups and task forces aided the Collaborative's efforts, ensuring broad engagement across all communities.

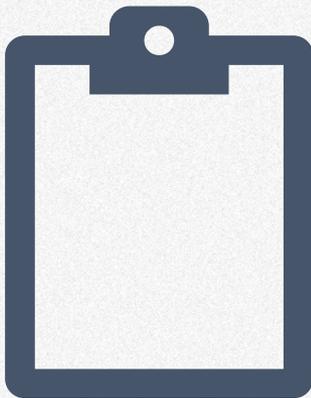
Highlights from these efforts included:

- ▶ 89 meetings with various stakeholder groups
- ▶ 10 interviews with contributing organizations
- ▶ 7 unmet needs data collectors that were disseminated across all community sectors
- ▶ 7 surveys distributed to the general public or specific community sectors



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# Public Survey

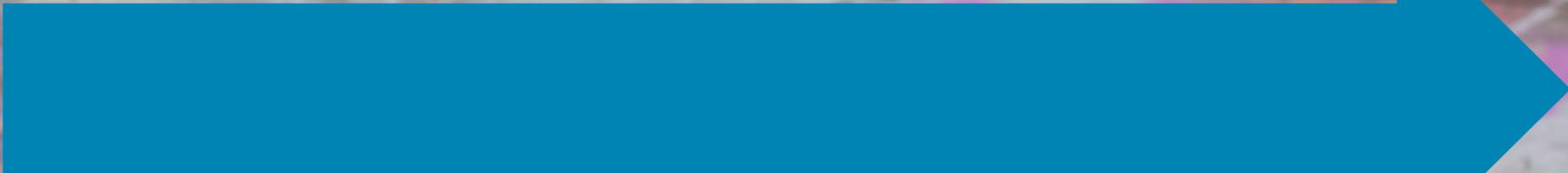


- ▶ Impact on Household: ~50% most mentioned 'quality of life', ~35% 'financial', ~10% 'mental health', others included 'medical', 'childcare', and 'home schooling'
- ▶ ~93% had access to the internet, reasons for not having access related to: lack of provider coverage, financial, or lack of need
- ▶ ~43% had experienced job losses due to the pandemic
- ▶ ~7% were in need of childcare following the spring in-person school closures
- ▶ ~5% would need financial assistance to cover the costs of childcare

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*Highlight summaries from the survey results taken 8/11-9/4/2020.  
(866 participants)*

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# Government, Education, & Policy



<i>Educational Systems</i>	<i>Sector Summary</i>
<i>Infrastructure, Connectivity, &amp; Transportation</i>	<i>Event Impacts</i>
<i>County Operations &amp; Programs</i>	<i>Unmet Needs</i>

# Educational Systems



School closures

Need for school-aged care

Impacts to workforce

Impacts to behavioral health & education

The current COVID-19 pandemic has been the largest shock to **educational systems** in over a generation. The event has presented numerous challenges to this sector, many of which have resulted in **cascading impacts across the entire community**.

This sector's success will dictate overall community recovery, especially relating to the economy. The sector has reacted remarkably, to ensure that student education continued during the event.

While the pandemic has presented challenges to providing educational services, it has also affected many **ancillary services** the community relies upon, including **school-aged care**.

The need now is to bridge the gap with marginalized populations that do not have access to virtual resources and technology. Children of color and low-income students often struggle in traditional classrooms and the move to virtual schooling is widening the gap in student success.

In addition. It is crucial that we provide the **mental health resources** needed by our educators, students, and families.

Long-term recovery for this sector is expected, as educational systems must continue to evolve and provide necessary services to their community. There is **tremendous opportunity** for sector and whole-community improvements based on lessons learned from this event.

# Event Impacts



The educational systems sector is composed of pre-K through 12th grade and higher learning institutions. Prior to, during, and following the pandemic, this sector has / will serve its students and families.

School districts and educational institutions had many strengths pre-pandemic, allowing them to maneuver through the changing COVID-19 environment. Programs and services existed to assist low-income or underserved students, including meal and transportation services and additional instruction opportunities, as well as access and functional needs support. Existing communication systems also proved valuable as the COVID-19 event unfolded.

Previously unexposed sector weaknesses pre-pandemic related to

the **availability of technology and connectivity in a virtual setting**. Most school systems were not set up for full or even partial virtual learning, with the exception of higher education institutions which offered these services to some students.

The pandemic event caused massive disruptions to this sector, with instantaneous **cascading impacts affecting the entire community**. In-person learning was cancelled, **forcing virtual learning**. For pre-K – 12, this created the additional challenge for families to essentially home-school their children. For others, such as those with special learning needs, the virtual learning environment is an additional challenge to learning.

This proved difficult for all, from parents working from home themselves - to those unable to

work remotely and be at home. While institutions were able to provide curriculum for their students, the **lack of school-aged care** quickly became an issue for families.

In the spring, it was a quickly evolving environment where changes occurred rapidly, causing **confusion and stress on the system**. Additionally, schools had to find ways to provide computers and 'hot spots' to those students without these resources.

Through the summer schools had a chance to work through key considerations and create solutions for the fall. As it was unknown where the community and virus would be at that time, assumptions had to be made to plan effectively.

# Event Impacts

While virtual schooling has provided value during this event, it has presented challenges to portions of the community. Access to broadband, and technology to implement remote learning, varies across the sector. Additionally, critical **ancillary services** (i.e. food) were unavailable. These programs have since been decoupled from school to ensure those experiencing food insecurity have access.

The **closure of both schools and libraries** created disparity in the learning environment. Schools worked hard to solve these challenges as quickly as possible, but some areas do not have the infrastructure necessary for adequate solutions.

These closures also created a new problem being referred to as '**ghost students**'. In hundreds of instances,

schools lost track of students and do not know how their education is progressing.

**School-aged care** continues to be a concern as we enter the fall. Women, in particular, are **leaving the workforce** in droves to stay home and support their children's school and care needs. This will have a long-term impact on our economic recovery, as well as for women in the workforce overall, exacerbating the gender pay gap. Many low-income families are bearing the burden of lack of access to school-aged care, and this will have an impact on long-term earning potential and pay gaps that currently exist. The rural mountain communities also have access challenges.

School-aged care challenges are currently being exacerbated by new hybrid school schedules, where students may not be at school for the entire week or day. Multiple children in a home having differing schedules further adds to this stress.



The **lack of in-person engagement** opportunities presents its own challenges that are being reacted to as the pandemic continues. Mental health services, for both staff and students (and families), is a need that will continue through and beyond this event.

The constant pressures and **stresses from this long-term disaster** are impacting the entire community, but the effects may be magnified for younger, student populations. Economic family stressors - loss of jobs and income, coupled with the uncertainty about the future are taking an emotional toll on all.

**Staffing challenges** are impacting the sector, as educators (many older) decide not to return to the classroom. For those that remain, fear of contracting the virus, especially if at high-risk, is great.

# Event Impacts



Teacher workloads are expanding as many are forced to prepare for both remote and in-person learning concurrently, leading to exhaustion and frustration.

Meeting **public health orders** is an additional stress relating to decontamination, contact tracing, and quarantine procedures, in addition to dealing with protocol pushback from the community. Staff also must deal with the challenges these protocols place on teaching.

Impacts to many **auxiliary services** that this sector provides also affect the community. In addition to school-aged care, these include transportation, technology access, after-school activities and care, and meal services.

**All community sectors will be directly impacted by the successes and failures of the educational systems.**

All education providers must have plans in place to move to remote learning as required. This necessitates **additional technology, supplies, and coordination** for success. Some classes, such as hands-on learning (welding, auto, art, etc) cannot effectively be taught remotely so these types of courses could be severely impacted. In higher education this can put degrees and certificate programs at risk.

In addition to COVID-19, an additional concern now is how flu season will impact the sector and what additional needs may arise. Work continues to mitigate these effects and is constantly adapting as the sector enters the fall. Other known concerns involve student performance and whether the sector is collectively falling behind.

Currently, schools have adopted a mix of in-person, remote, and

hybrid options for their students. Outbreaks are being closely monitored and quarantines and revisions back to remote-only are currently occurring as warranted. Increased clusters are now being observed at many higher education campuses.

**Parents returning to work** is dependent on the success of this sector. The **economy** is on the line. This event is going to alter how both the educational systems, and the community's workforce, operates in the future. There is still much to learn, but with flexibility and coordination (across this and all sectors) long-term recovery is expected. In the end, both this sector and the entire community can evolve and improve from the unique opportunities that the COVID-19 event is providing.

# Unmet Needs



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*Prioritize children at greatest risk for long-term learning loss*

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*Partner with municipalities and school districts for better resource coordination*

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*Mask compliance and enforcement*

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*Provide sense of safety for students & staff*

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*Expand available technologies and remote learning capabilities (including broadband accessibility) across the county*

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*Provide social and emotional support services for students*

---

*Prepare for and improve remote learning infrastructure*

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- ▶ Increase "school-aged" childcare resources if schools not open or kids learning remote
- ▶ Provide mental health services for staff and students.
- ▶ Provide support and resources for populations with access and functional needs, and their families, if in-person not available
- ▶ Identify additional space to conduct on-campus learning, meeting distancing requirements
- ▶ Receive local assistance for needs temporarily fulfilled by federal funds
- ▶ Provide support for programs aimed at underserved children and culturally diverse populations.
- ▶ Obtain mobile internet units for rural connectivity
- ▶ Acquire and fund PPE and disinfectant supplies
- ▶ Expand sector staffing resources
- ▶ Provide staff training for online instruction and remote working
- ▶ Increase county's pre-school capacity
- ▶ Improve staff's virtual access to remote work technologies and processes
- ▶ Receive information on financial resources
- ▶ Identify school bussing / transportation alternatives if regular access is limited
- ▶ Continue sector education relating to county / state health guidelines
- ▶ Receive contact tracing guidance
- ▶ Receive increased messaging support from county social media

# Infrastructure, Connectivity, & Transportation



The current pandemic event has generated challenges for Larimer County's **infrastructure, connectivity, and transportation** sector. Many of these existed pre-event, but some have been magnified by the current pandemic event.

The question now is, what is the new normal as it relates to this sector? Many pre-COVID baselines will be redrawn as **society adapts to post-pandemic life**. Major changes to how other sectors operate will

determine how this sector advances forward.

Long-term recovery for this sector is expected, as the government must continue to evolve and provide necessary services to its community. This will be influenced by future community patterns relating to the "new normal".

# Event Impacts



Larimer County had a thriving economy and a diverse business sector prior to the pandemic. The high cost of living forced many workers to travel from outside the county to work.

The urban corridors of the county have some public transportation options, especially between Fort Collins and Loveland, but much of the rest of the county lacked public transportation services. Ride share services were available from multiple service providers, including paratransit and other medical transportation services.

Now, urban **transit services are well below pre-event** usage levels. This may translate into more demand for on-call ride services or single ride alternatives (paratransit).

People **no longer trust public transportation** or carpooling, so more cars (and bicycles) are expected to be on our roadways. This increased vehicular traffic is impacting air quality.

As medical providers begin in-person services again, a surge in demand is anticipated for **medical care transportation**.

Additional challenges impact those without personal transportation resources, who may be unable to seek medical treatment or COVID-related testing.

Due to limitations on the number of students allowed on each school bus, school districts **are unable to transport all eligible students**. This may cause transportation challenges for working parents, possible workforce issues, and traffic concerns.

The public health orders created a need to expand services outside for many businesses and restaurants, creating a need for **right of way access** in many cases.

Connectivity has remained a concern across the county for many years. The urban areas tend to have good cell phone access and internet connectivity, but a large portion of the rural areas are without such services, **limiting their ability to get information, utilize virtual services, and work / school from home**.

Lack of access to the information and the internet is a concern within the County's Immigrant communities and among Non-English-Speaking community members, as well.

# Event Impacts



Record levels of visitation to park facilities, such as Horsetooth & Carter Reservoirs, are causing **traffic and parking issues**. During peak demand, vehicles are being backed up into the travel lanes on mainline roads. Additionally there have been increases in garbage, vandalism, and unattended illegal campfires. Enforcement resources are not adequate to mitigate this growth in usage.

There was an uptick in demand for **internet connectivity and increased speed** when the schools closed, and the Stay-At-Home Order was implemented. Many businesses transitioned to remote working.

Rural mountain and marginalized communities are not well served by affordable broadband and **remote learning / working is not an option**.

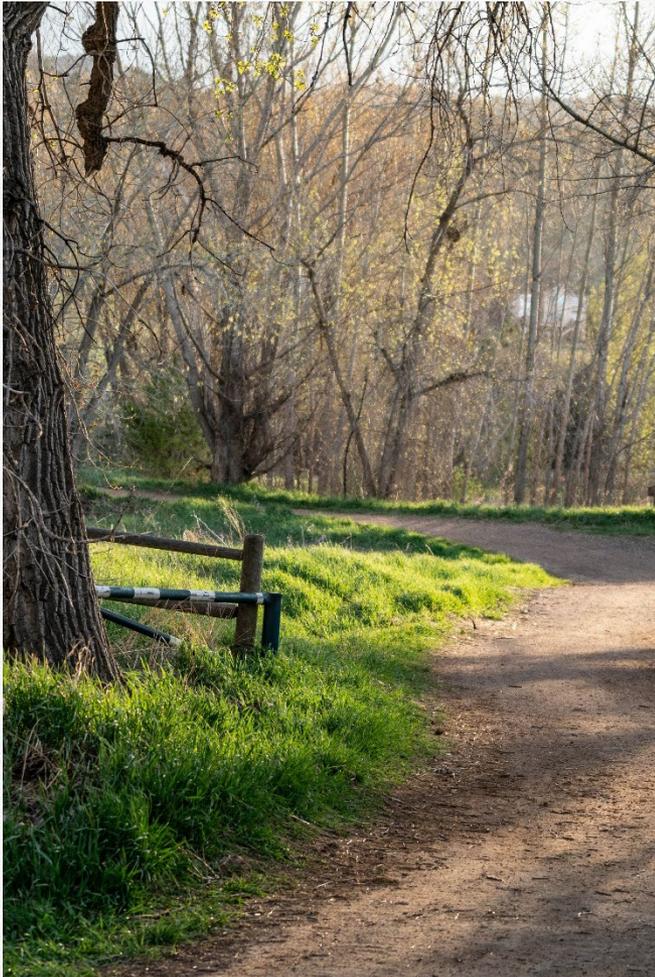
The **closure of library** systems created added stress for those populations without access to internet at home, which impacts a larger proportion of marginalized communities. This is generating increased desire for broadband services in these areas.

The pivot to virtual also taught many businesses that they do not need to follow past practices of having all employees on-site, so **continued remote work** is expected to some degree. Similarly, universities also came to these conclusions.

The switch to virtual also rekindled the county's broadband improvement conversations, as **remote work /school and tele-health is not feasible** for many rural areas.

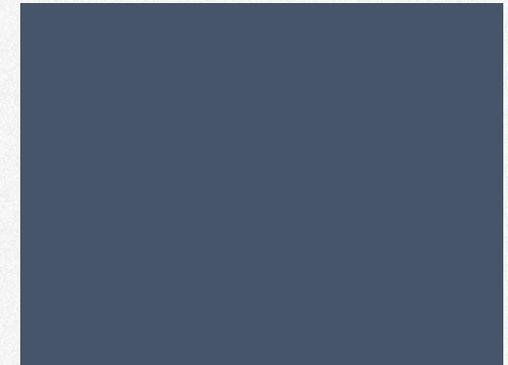
COVID surges and stronger measures to offset the virus are continual stressors that will impact the sector's ability to **meet capacity goals**. Recruitment and retention of employees has been and will continue to be a challenge, with school and child care impacts creating further uncertainty. As with all sectors, the need for **behavioral support** for staff is important.

# Event Impacts



**Transportation limitations** will continue to cause a strain on the workforce, especially with the enhanced need for flexible schedules. The unpredictability over **county budgets**, expected to be reduced for the foreseeable future, **may also impact programs**. **Increased disinfection processes** for transportation equate to increased costs.

**The lack of culturally attuned, linguistically diverse or accessible transportation, technology or public communications continue to be a limiting factor for families disparately impacted by the pandemic.**



Urban transit services may remain below pre-COVID-19 usage levels. This could translate into more demand for on-call ride services or single ride alternatives.

A demand for medical services will continue with the lack of available transportation options for at-risk individuals. If the shift stays towards tele-medicine, then there will remain the ongoing need for better connectivity.

# Unmet Needs



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*Expand available broadband accessibility across the county, with an emphasis on disproportionately impacted areas and communities*

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*Improved access to medical resources in rural areas (tele-health, transportation services)*

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*Provide sense of safety for transit workers and riders*

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- ▶ Provide mental health services for employees
- ▶ Adapt public transportation to retain ridership
- ▶ Provide non-medical transportation resources (older adult)
- ▶ Evaluate the impacts of expected lower transit usage levels
- ▶ Improve process for obtaining financial support
- ▶ Assess solutions to address record levels of park visitors
- ▶ Coordinate right of way access for businesses / restaurants to expand capacity
- ▶ Identify school bussing / transportation alternatives if regular access is limited

# County Operations & Programs



COVID-19 has presented many challenges to providing continued services through **county operations and programs**. Larimer County government performed tremendously as it was forced to pivot to new tools and technologies.

Bridging the gap with populations that do not have access to online resources will be a complex task and will be partially dictated by **how the pandemic evolves** over the coming months. Along with improving technological resources, the County has an opportunity to update and revise systems to better include the rapid expansion of diverse populations. This brings with more linguistically and culturally attuned resources and messaging.

There are many variables affecting county revenue, some of which are being caused by the pandemic and others which are external to the event. It is not known how future budgets may be impacted by COVID-19.

Long-term recovery for this sector is expected, as the government must continue to evolve and provide necessary services to its community. This will be influenced by the future course of this pandemic, coupled with available budget. There is **tremendous opportunity for operational improvements** based on lessons learned from this event.

# Event Impacts

Prior to, during, and following the pandemic, Larimer County's government has / will serve its residents, visitors, and businesses, while helping to support local municipalities, districts, and organizations. County operations and programs is a broad sector focused on these services.

Input for this plan was provided by the following departments: human resources, facilities, public affairs, information technology, criminal justice services, and financial services.

Challenges brought about by the pandemic impacted all portions of this sector. The government had to quickly adapt to continue providing services to the public, which it succeeded in doing.

Services include both internal and public-facing processes which utilize

a mix of field and office staff, some of which did work remotely prior to the event.

Following COVID-19's appearance, the government pivoted towards providing **virtual services**. This resulted in the increased use of existing and new online tools, leveraging previous and on-going migrations to cloud-based systems. Working from home has been beneficial to many staff, but others feel the lack of human interaction introduces negative impacts to their daily jobs.

The **lack of in-person engagement** opportunities has been an on-going challenge. Virtual access challenges to underserved populations is **creating further barriers** to serve these communities.

Additionally, **operational challenges** are still being mitigated relating to: building capacities, increased janitorial and sanitation requirements, workplace usage, and public interaction point protections.



**Impacts to County revenue from the pandemic are difficult to succinctly summarize. Many factors are at play including: the length of economic shutdowns, interest rates, and how much federal stimulus is received.**

Through these COVID-imposed changes, departments have **realized some efficiencies** through process improvements and work from home policies. The future **government's footprint may evolve** to be much different than existed pre-pandemic.

All community sectors that rely or interact with government services have been impacted. In-person services are slowly being ramped up as permissible. **Future revenue decreases** are an upcoming challenge and solutions are currently being evaluated.

# Unmet Needs



*Over twenty-five additional needs were identified ranging from operations, policy, staffing, and programming. These relate to reacting to the current "normal" imposed by the COVID-19 event.*

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*Provide sense of safety for the community & staff*

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*Develop recovery data metrics & tracking platform*

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*Provide mental health services for employees*

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- ▶ Funding to offset unanticipated costs or revenue deficits.
- ▶ Monitor and evaluate mask compliance
- ▶ Expand available broadband accessibility across the county
- ▶ Acquire and fund PPE and disinfectant supplies
- ▶ Improve coordination across data tracking groups from an analysis and response perspective
- ▶ Availability of financial resources to continue testing / contact tracing efforts.
- ▶ Implement enhanced safety measures to manage future outbreaks
- ▶ Continue sector education relating to county / state health guidelines
- ▶ Evaluate tax extensions / reductions / forgiveness programs
- ▶ Mitigate supply chain disruptions

# Workforce, Small Biz, & Eco Dev



*Economic Rebuilding  
Strategy*

*Workforce & Employment*

*Small & Mainstreet Business*

*Primary Employers*

*Hospitality, Visitor  
Experience, & Outdoor  
Recreation*

*Creative Industries*

*Nonprofit Support*

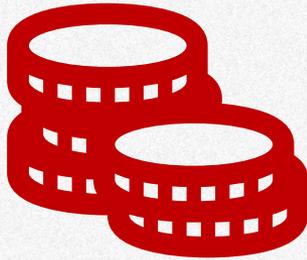
*Sector Summary*

*Event Impacts*

*Unmet Needs*

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# Economic Rebuilding Strategy



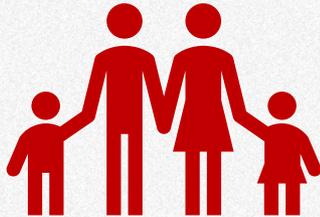
Prior to the pandemic, Larimer County's economy was experiencing sustained growth and relatively low unemployment. Implementing necessary public health measures in response to COVID-19 has had an immeasurable impact on the **Economic Sector**, affecting all communities and disproportionately those that are underserved.

Strong economic recovery depends on many factors beginning with effective containment of the virus and allowing businesses to safely re-open. Also critical is ensuring equitable access to childcare, financial support to families and the unemployed, as well as restructuring approaches for serving marginalized groups.

An obstacle of financial decision planning is the data typically relied on to inform those decisions and business models lags far behind the immediate need for figures. Adapting to the long-term implications of these short-term sector disruptions will be difficult without timely information.

To formulate an **Economic Rebuilding Strategy**, flexibility in the perception of the future will be critical. Support for the sector to continually adapt to new challenges is just as crucial as financial support for community members, organizations, and businesses, to encourage the growth needed.

# Workforce & Employment



“The aftermath of the Great Recession was characterized by proliferation of low-quality jobs, sluggish wage growth for most workers, and sustained disparities between groups. The COVID-19 crisis is already exacerbating these trends and forcing economic development leaders to consider a range of responses that 1) help local businesses maintain resilience and productivity, and 2) pursue economic and racial justice.”

All sectors across the community were affected by the restrictions created to keep individuals safe from the virus. The necessary closures that resulted created a crisis for the **Workforce and Employment** sector.

Public facing businesses such as entertainment, tourism, dining, and retail industries, which typically employ low wage workers, saw the greatest impact.

The recovery work ahead lends an **opportunity to build an inclusive system** which considers the needs of all community members.

As the economy makes forward progress, collaboration of local governments and business partners is critical to effectively addressing the **long-term community consequences**, and those specifically of minority and underserved populations who have been affected most.

A collective effort for recovery planning, in the northern Front Range, is already underway. Economic developers, chambers of commerce, and communities across the region are working on the **“Reignite Our Economy” strategic plan**. This plan is using community specific data to develop the most relevant and successful ways to move forward, both for local jurisdictions and Larimer County as a whole.

# Event Impacts



Prior to the pandemic, industries that employed low-wage workers were doing very well. The restaurant and entertainment scene in **Larimer County was thriving** and construction of new buildings were booming, to meet demands from the rapidly growing population.

**Entrepreneurship is abundant** across the community. This is aided by numerous county programs to support people who are working to open their own businesses and drive employment.

As businesses, restaurants, retail stores and venues went under public health restrictions, there was an immediate **impact on their ability to retain employees** and work to keep their businesses operating.

The county business development programs had to adapt their

support role, helping with funding applications critical to business owners.

Stressors for this sector are tied to customer willingness to venture out and being able to put money back into businesses. However, with an **uncertain timeline** for the containment of the virus and availability of a vaccine, the public may continue to be cautious for an extended period, even as communities reopen safely.

**The permanent closure of some businesses and other employment opportunities, as a result of the pandemic, will leave a critical gap between a willing workforce and the number of jobs available.**

A future impact of businesses adapting to customer needs may include the **loss of jobs due to automation and online shopping**. As

customer behaviors change, less interaction may continue to be preferred, leaving businesses to require less staff.

Businesses that were able to go to a tele-work model may not come back to their office space, eliminating jobs for building maintenance and janitorial staff.

Travel is expected to recover strongly, which will help with hospitality jobs, however it may be a while before people are willing to go to concerts or head back into restaurants.

As jobs become available, **equitable access to childcare** may be an issue for those trying to return to work. This may leave a noticeable gap for minority communities and low-wage workers.

# Event Impacts



## Job Losses

- ▶ In the two-county region (Larimer and Weld) over **42,000 individuals filed initial unemployment claims** between March 7 and May 16, 2020 compared to about 2,300 claims during the same period in 2019.
- ▶ During this period in Larimer County, the **unemployment rate was about 11.0%** compared to the highest unemployment rate of the 2008 recession of 8.3%.
- ▶ Unemployment claims highlight the **hardest hit economic sectors:** arts, accommodation, food service, entertainment, recreation, retail trade, non-COVID-19 healthcare, social assistance, construction, administrative services, waste services and others.

## Financial Support

- ▶ While communities adapted and put plans into action, **temporary relief from the CARES Act** provided support through Unemployment Insurance (UI), which provided \$600 per week. This was expanded for people who may not typically qualify for state unemployment insurance (i.e. gig workers, self-employed).
- ▶ From March to September, the **average weekly UI claims totaled 11,562**. In 2019, it was 922.

## Outreach

- ▶ As minority and underserved populations have been most impacted, inclusive outreach and **education about specific guidelines and financial aid options** ensured community members had access to short-term relief.

## Tele-work Impacts

- ▶ An **inequity in risk of exposure to COVID-19** is a concern as higher wage jobs were able to shift to tele-work. Many people have jobs essential to keep the community functioning, especially those in lower wage positions, putting them in greater contact with the public.

## Re-opening Consequences

- ▶ Employment saw a rebound in June, as businesses began to re-open. This, however, was followed by an increase in cases. In September, as universities re-opened there was a similar occurrence. The county continues to monitor closely for **trends of increasing cases, which may result in more restrictions being implemented**.

# Unmet Needs



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*Provide a sense of safety for the entire workforce*

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*Provide "School-aged" care if schools are not open*

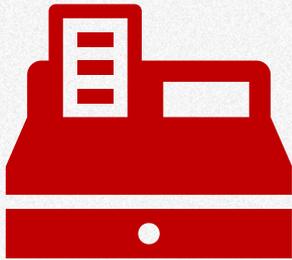
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*Continue to expand broadband*

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- Provide enhanced nonprofit coordination and support efforts
- Educate businesses on the need for workforce flexibility
- Public transportation adaptations to retain ridership (gig economy)
- Unemployment insurance benefits for self-employed and sole proprietors
- Most musicians / gig workers are paid as 1099s and therefore may not qualify for unemployment insurance
- Support for nonprofits that deliver services not provided by government or business
- Re-open economic drivers
- Re-open businesses
- Additional guidance or clarification to operate safely or compliantly
- Better communication and a central place to follow updates and guidelines
- Provide mental health to employees
- Build up consumer & business confidence in the process
- Analyze the business system and where it broke down in order to build it back more resilient

# Small & Mainstreet Businesses



**Small & Mainstreet Businesses** are the lifeblood of a community. The personal relationships they nurture and the history they hold are essential to the character of their communities.

These businesses have been some of the hardest hit by the pandemic, as small businesses have **less working capital** to stay operational than larger businesses. This limits the amount of time a business can stay operational through a disruption to revenue.

Unfortunately, it is too soon to say how these businesses will ultimately end up. The longer the pandemic stretches on, coupled with the timing of a potential vaccine, will be the main drivers of this sector's future vision.

# Event Impacts



Larimer County is known for its history and resilience, with businesses all over the county staying open for decades and the rebuilding of the community through numerous disasters. It is part of the culture to keep small businesses going and **support what makes the county unique.**

As pandemic restrictions went into place, the working capital needed to support owners and employees during closures were used quickly. Federal financial programs associated with COVID-19 have provided stopgap support and **many businesses have been able to reopen in some capacity.**

When the Stay-At-Home orders were lifted, these businesses struggled with **new safety regulations** and the **costs of implementing them** to protect workers and customers alike. Customer willingness to shop is contingent on following these guidelines and creating a safe environment. However, many of these patrons may be unwilling to shop in person for the foreseeable future.

Some small businesses have closed for good. It is unknown how many others may shut their doors permanently, without knowing how the virus may cause **future health orders to be put back into place.** The full impacts on employment and the workforce may not be clearly known for some time.

As businesses continue to **adapt and develop new plans**, many will still require additional federal, state, and local assistance to survive.

**State and local governments have tried to support these efforts by easing certain restrictions and creating metric-driven variances, to keep businesses open. There has been great collaboration on innovative ideas to boost businesses.**

One example is the “Patio Program”, where parking spaces have been converted to outside seating for restaurants. However, as the weather changes, businesses remain concerned people will no longer be interested in outdoor dining, or the other outdoor adaptations these small businesses have created.

# Event Impacts



Moving forward, understanding local **consumer behavior changes** will be fundamental in helping businesses create sustainable models. Connecting businesses with critical resources available to them will provide support in making the necessary adjustments in the sector.

**Continual engagement** with businesses in a variety of formats, such as surveys or townhalls, will foster a better understanding of the continued **challenges going forward**. Gathering this information in an approachable and effective way will ensure that any aid or support can be specifically targeted to their unmet needs in a timely manner.

Some assistance is coming from state and local governments in the form of loans or grants. These efforts were the result of the Corona Virus Relief Funds (CVRF) allocations, which must be spent before the end of the year. However, this funding is competitive and it is crucial that **businesses get equal opportunity in obtaining funds**.

Surveys were utilized to gain a better understanding of the situation that businesses have been in since the start of the pandemic. Three separate **surveys of business owners** in Northern

Colorado have been conducted by the Northern Colorado Regional Economic Development Initiative, NoCo REDI. Each survey represented a **varying number of business owners and many different sectors**.

In reviewing the surveys, information was pulled for this plan to provide a pertinent overview of the situation across the five month period. These results are summarized on the following page.

All three surveys can be [found here](#).

# Small Business Survey



## “Impact of Stay at Home Orders” Survey #1 (Mar 31 to Apr 10)

- ▶ 49% of businesses were currently open.
- ▶ 63% of the respondents had 1-9 employees
- ▶ 42% of businesses had reduced employment
- ▶ 28% of respondents had laid off or furloughed more than 50% of their workforce
- ▶ A majority of respondents implemented increased sanitation practices and social distancing
- ▶ 30% had applied for SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan (up to \$10k). 28% had not applied but intended to
- ▶ 27% are looking for assistance exceeding \$25K

## “Transition to Safer at Home” Survey #2 (Apr 30 – May 18)

- ▶ Largest segment of response from Accommodation and Food businesses
- ▶ 62% of respondents did not close
- ▶ 44% had have furloughed employees or reduced staff hours
- ▶ Concerns were focused on how economic impacts would create a lack of demand for products
- ▶ 76% indicated they had the information they needed to operate safely and compliantly
- ▶ 71% applied to the PPP and of those 78% received the requested amount

## “Business Outlook and Continuity” Survey # 3 (Jul 27 – Aug 15)

- ▶ 72% of respondents expected 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter 2020 revenues to be lower than 2019
- ▶ 24% of respondents expected 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter 2020 revenues to be 50% lower than 2019
- ▶ 69% of respondents expected 4<sup>th</sup> quarter revenues to be less than 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter in 2020
- ▶ 1/3 of respondents had pivoted or changed their business activities as a result of changing customer wants, including increased online presence and complying with health orders
- ▶ 9% of respondents need assistance to prepare a plan for their business under increased business restriction

# Unmet Needs



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***Target relief to those micro/small businesses most impacted who were unable to get federal assistance***

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***Coordinated support for the "Reignite Our Economy" plan***

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***Provide sense of safety for clients & staff***

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- Provide school-aged care if schools are not open
- Increase education on County's health suppression plan
- Acquire funding for PPE and disinfectant supplies
- Continue to collect data on local businesses
- Continue to expand broadband
- Permitting other uses for agricultural lands
- Cares Act and other funding eligibility source education
- Need to replace rental, mortgage, and utility assistance resources
- Mask compliance and enforcement
- Payroll protection
- Marketing support via social media
- Unemployment insurance for self-employed and sole proprietors
- Reopen businesses
- Increase education /relationship between SBDC and small businesses
- Improve curbside service / get customers to order curbside as opposed to needing to come into the store
- Additional guidance or clarification to operate safely or compliantly

# Primary Employers



**Primary Employers** refer to those industries that export a significant amount of the goods and services they produce. There are numerous industries in this sector, spanning a broad range from low to high wage.

The current pandemic event produced similar impacts as experienced across most other sectors. The main difference with primary employers is that they are generally more stable financially and were therefore able to **more easily adapt**.

The largest challenge for long-term recovery for this sector is understanding the unknown **changes to consumer habits** that will result from the pandemic. How those collectively or uniquely impact the broad range of industries in this sector will determine what the “new normal” will become.

# Event Impacts



Overall, the primary employer sector was in a good place and operating smoothly prior to the pandemic event. This diverse collection of industries made up a **large portion of the county's economy**.

Examples of some lower wage industries include: agriculture; retail trade; accommodation and food services; forestry; and hunting / fishing.

Medium wage industries comprise such industries as: construction; manufacturing; education; healthcare; public administration; transportation / warehousing; and real estate.

Those industries considered high wage cover: finance / insurance; professional, scientific, and technical services; information technology; utilities; and wholesale trade.

For Northern Colorado, some of the top primary employer industries are real estate; government and government enterprise; manufacturing; and construction.

**As with all other sectors, COVID-19 brought major changes to day-to-day operations, but those impacts were less drastic to primary employers than experienced by others.**

This is mainly because these companies and organizations are generally financially stable. This allowed industries across this sector **to adapt** to new requirements and needs to continue to operate.

Primary employers were mostly affected by **supply chain disruptions** which impacting manufacturing. They also needed to make **accommodations for employees to work from home**.

Availability of **child and school-aged care** challenged many across this sector, as employees struggled with working remotely while also caring for their families.

As society gradually reopened, businesses needed to **rethink their office space** to ensure employees could work safely. In some cases, businesses that were able decided to continue to work virtually for the foreseeable future.

It is unknown what the longer-term impacts will be to this sector. Changes in consumer habits, the repercussions of small business failures, and the effects of normalizing work from home policies could **alter the economy in unforeseen ways**.

# Unmet Needs



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***Target relief to those micro/small businesses most impacted who were unable to get federal assistance***

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***Coordinated support for the "Re-Ignite" Plan***

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***Provide sense of safety for employees***

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- Provide school-aged care if schools are not open
- Increase education on the County's health suppression plan
- Acquire funding for PPE and disinfectant supplies
- Continue to collect data on local businesses
- Continue to expand broadband
- Permitting other uses for agricultural lands
- Cares Act and other funding eligibility source education
- Need to replace rental, mortgage, and utility assistance resources
- Mask compliance and enforcement
- Payroll protection
- Marketing support via social media
- Unemployment insurance for self-employed and sole proprietors
- Reopen businesses
- Increase education /relationship between Small Business Development Center and small businesses
- Improve curb-side service and increase customer use of this service
- Additional guidance or clarification to operate safely or compliantly

# Hospitality, Visitor Experience, & Outdoor Recreation



People from all over the world visit Larimer County year-round for the beautiful parks, mountains, cultural events, and access to numerous outdoor activities. A main economic driver for Northern Colorado is the **Hospitality, Visitor Experience & Outdoor Recreation** sector.

Included in this sector is **The Ranch Events Complex**, an important venue that supports many events year-round

Impacts from COVID-19 were varied across this diverse sector, with some being positive. These positive impacts relate to the **large increases in outdoor recreation** during the event, as people were looking for anything to do to get out of their homes.

Increased usage is also a major negative impact for many reasons. As with all sectors, the negative impacts caused by the pandemic are forcing industries to **adapt and evolve**.

It is expected that this sector's long-term recovery will succeed, but it will require efforts to ensure **visitor experiences are not diminished** with expected continued recreation growth.

The pandemic has provided an opportunity to take progressive actions to enhance visitor experiences for years to come.

# Event Impacts



Larimer County is a gateway to numerous experiences that both travelers and residents take advantage of year-round. Its beautiful landscapes and varied terrain, coupled with the county's diverse collection of creative industries, provides **ample opportunities to recreate and relax**. Because of this fact, the Hospitality, Visitor Experience & Outdoor Recreation sector is a **main economic driver** for the county and region.

Another important fixture in this sector is The Ranch Events Complex. This venue is home to the county fair, rodeo, concerts, performances, trade shows, and Colorado Eagles hockey team.

The COVID-19 event produced a **dynamic effect on this industry**. Initially, people stopped traveling and this sector was heavily affected. However, as people began to look for a safe way to venture out during lockdown, many came to Colorado, often from states experiencing large COVID-19 outbreaks.

The resulting influx of out-of-state visitors, locals, and other Coloradans traveling to outdoor areas across the county came with new issues. The need to **enforce local guidelines for social distancing, face coverings, and capacity restrictions** proved to be an on-going challenge.

Visitor safety has always been an overall concern, whether on trails, in parking areas, and on roads, but it is now a heightened concern due to **overcrowding of outdoor attractions**.

The increased usage of the county's reservoirs and open spaces, in addition to Rocky Mountain National Park and National Forest lands, had a positive economic effect, **increasing sale and user taxes**.

Overall though, the economic data is difficult to quantify as this sector's reaction to the pandemic varies greatly. Some employers (47%) reported the need to layoff / furlough employees, while others reported hiring (36%) in August. A link to a more detailed report on the industry can be [found here](#).

# Event Impacts



Due to the rush to get outdoors, reconfiguring the parking areas around some natural attractions and increasing vehicle capacity is a future need. Necessary road and safety improvements, to both Horsetooth and Carter Lake reservoirs are a result of the **increased usage** being experienced.

The hospitality industry has been uniquely impacted by the pandemic, mostly due to **cancelled events**. Ideally, a forgiving or abatement of fees and taxes could help, but this would produce its own ripple effects on local governments budgets in future years.

The Ranch Events Complex and Budweiser Events Center were converted to an alternate care site, to support hospitals in the event of a surge from COVID patients. This was a large-scale impact to the county.

This had the **benefit of providing employment** and gave Larimer County the ability to help neighboring counties and states, if needed.

With the cancellation of large events due to public health restrictions, the contract to use the property helped The Ranch with some of the losses. Although with **the unknown of when events will be allowed in the future**, The Ranch may struggle longer term.

Overall, this sector is very diverse and is experiencing a wide array of impacts from the pandemic, both positive and negative.

**The pandemic provides an opportunity to take progressive actions to enhance visitor experiences for years to come.**

Looking forward, this sector is expected to continue to recover. The COVID-19 event has helped to confirm the value that this sector brings to the county and further solidify its importance to the community.

# Unmet Needs



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***Target relief to those micro/small businesses most impacted who were unable to get federal assistance***

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***Relief of local fees and taxes for industry***

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***Improved parking configuration and vehicle capacity in open spaces***

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- Target relief to those micro/small businesses most impacted who were unable to get federal assistance
- Cares Act and other funding eligibility source education
- Need to replace rental, mortgage, and utility assistance resources
- Mask compliance and enforcement
- Assistance with increased sanitation/social distancing costs for businesses
- Payroll protection
- Marketing support via social media
- Reopening of businesses
- Additional guidance or clarification to operate safely or compliantly
- Further communication on financial resources that are available
- Donated or heavily discounted radio / television ads
- Better streamlined process for financial support
- Developing message for general public that businesses and organizations can use going forward
- Need to build customer trust and behavior
- Identifying and addressing the differing needs of businesses in unincorporated areas vs. urban corridors

# Creative Industries



The attraction to Northern Colorado is not only in the majestic beauty of the Front Range, but also through the diverse **Creative Industry** within Larimer County. The **arts, music, culinary arts, and theatre** all shape the vibrant culture of communities and bring enjoyment to locals and visitors year-round. These industries also play a **vital economic role** for the county.

This sector was majorly impacted by COVID-19 and is **still unable to recover** while necessary public health orders are in place.

It is unknown what this sector's long-term recovery looks like, but success will require **community support**. Likewise, the community needs the support that these creative industries provide, as everyone recovers from the social toll of this pandemic event.

# Event Impacts



The **arts, music, culinary arts, and theatre** comprise an important sector within Larimer County. These creative industries contribute greatly to both the economy and the community culture. Over the last decade prior to COVID-19, this was a constantly growing and evolving industry.

**This sector has a vital role in the economy, bringing in over \$7.7 billion in revenues to the Northern Front Range.**

The creative industry was heavily impacted by COVID-19. **Closures of venues and cancellations of events** occurred quickly and may continue for **an extended period of time**. Large gatherings were the first prohibited events due to the need to implement public health orders. Now that gatherings of limited sizes are permitted, the social distancing requirements make it difficult to cover the costs of an event, let alone make a profit.

As many individuals suffer financially through this pandemic, these potential patrons may be **unable to support** this sector as they previously had.

This industry has a unique problem as workers often do not fit typical models of business. Providing information and outreach relating to **federal, state, and local aid available** to these workers and business owners can also be challenging.

The social toll from lack of opportunities to appreciate the work from this industry has been felt across communities. Ensuring support for those who make our community so colorful will help bolster recovery, as **they provide a much-needed break** from the day-to-day challenges and stresses of the pandemic. Support for this sector is vital for the community to collectively move forward.

# Event Impacts



The following information is from the: *“2020 Colorado Creative Economic Report with Initial Impacts of the COVID-19 Crisis”* report was a collaboration between:

*Margaret Hunt, Director, Colorado Creative Industries.*

*Dr. Michael Seman, Colorado State University, LEAP Institute of the Arts.*



## Employment

- ▶ In the North Front Range, between 2010 and 2019, the creative industry grew by 19% (6,773), totaling 41,575 jobs.

## Job Losses

- ▶ By July 2020, an estimated total of 31% (13,061) of those jobs will be lost
- ▶ The largest job losses are projected to come from:
  - ▶ Music, Theatre, Dance and Visual Arts (7,074)
  - ▶ Culinary Arts (1,486)
  - ▶ Design & Advertising (1,122)

## Sales

- ▶ In 2019, Creative Industries brought \$7.7B to the North Central economy.

## Sales Losses

- ▶ The Northern Front Range creative economy is estimated to contract by more than 8% or \$631M by July 2020
- ▶ The largest drop in sales will come from:
  - ▶ Music, Theatre, Dance and Visual Arts (\$253M)
  - ▶ Culinary Arts (\$152M)

# Unmet Needs

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*Advocate for local, state, and federal funding for creative workers, firms, and establishments*

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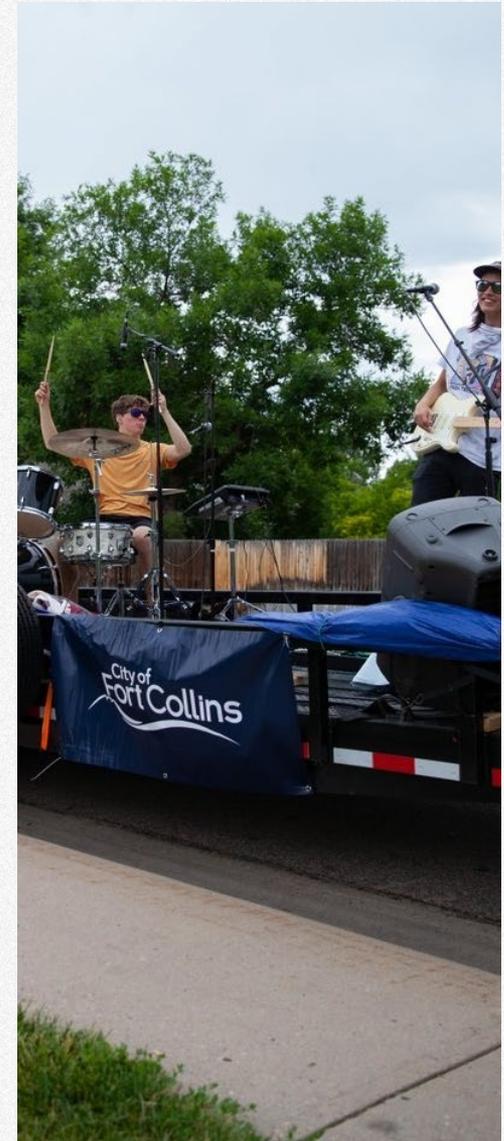
*Program similar to the New Deal-era's Federal Art Project, where unemployed workers could be put on projects in their communities and throughout the state*

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*Further communication on financial resources that are available*

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- ▶ Receive information on financial resources
- ▶ Provide mental health services for support staff and community
- ▶ Need to find additional resources for those that were relying on support programs which may no longer be available. (Ex. rental, mortgage, and utility assistance)



# Nonprofit Business Support



The on-going COVID-19 pandemic has hugely impacted the community's **nonprofit business support**. With many already struggling through the financial challenges common to this sector, the event has led to a large increase in community needs.

The **increased needs** shouldered by this sector are not always clear to the community as a whole, nor to the sector itself. This constantly

evolving list of services requires **flexibility and strong coordination** across the sector. Additionally, communication and collaboration with other community sectors is important to fully comprehend present needs and future trends.

This sector's long-term recovery **challenges are immense**. The community must come together as a whole to acknowledge and appreciate this sector's contributions to society.

# Event Impacts



**Nonprofit businesses** serve an integral function to Larimer County. In addition to their social cause and the public benefits they provide to the community, they are a critical component to the economic engine. They employ community members to fulfill their organizational goals and provide services people have come to rely on to enter the workforce (i.e. childcare).

**Nonprofits are normally accustomed to low operating margins, but now the increased demand of the services they provide and the additional expenses of operating safely in this new environment are straining organizations across the sector.**

Another challenge is adapting to new ways of providing services which previously relied on face-to-face interaction. Client access to **technology is a barrier**, as these organizations typically work with underserved populations.

Fundraising for these organizations has been impacted, as events had to be cancelled and people who donated previously may now be unable. Increased need for services and **decreased ability to obtain funds** adds another obstacle to their community assistance work.

Providing necessary financial support to this sector is critical to their continued success during a time when resources are stretched thin. For a well-rounded economic recovery it is important to see them as **equivalent to for-profit companies** and the private sector.

Disruption or discontinuation of operation of these businesses will have a cascading effect on the whole community. The gap in the services they provide will be **felt across all sectors**.

As the community recovers, having realistic expectations of the capabilities of nonprofit businesses will allow for a collaborative approach to ensure services for the community are not interrupted or unable to be delivered.

*Additional event impacts are also included in the related Volunteer Agencies & Faith-Based Organizations section of this plan, highlighted in the Community Support Services Area of Focus.*

# Unmet Needs



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*Provide enhanced nonprofit coordination and support efforts*

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*Virtual Events engagement, tools and training*

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*Faster testing results to get staff back to work*

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- ▶ Further communication on financial resources that are available
- ▶ Additional resources in supporting greater partnership in solidifying a joint and regional response
- ▶ Additional staffing capability at a time when needed the most (consultants or county)
- ▶ Support for nonprofits that deliver services not provided by government or business
- ▶ Replace aging population volunteer support
- ▶ Lack of flexibility of recovery funding
- ▶ Multi-year funding commitments to build reserves
- ▶ Developing rapport with vulnerable populations virtually
- ▶ Rent forgiveness, or cost sharing space
- ▶ Office space that meet childcare and Immigrant community needs
- ▶ Staff emotional support
- ▶ Better online client interaction
- ▶ Safe venues to perform and reduced space rental fees

# Community Support Services



*Older Adult Services*

*Housing Stability & Homelessness*

*Early Learning & Childcare*

*Voluntary Agencies & Faith-Based Orgs*

*Food & Essential Needs*

*Behavioral & Physical Health / Healthcare Access*

*Sector Summary*

*Event Impacts*

*Unmet Needs*

# Older Adult Services



The COVID-19 event is contributing to increased **older adult service** needs across the entire community. A pre-existing workforce shortage coupled with a lack of placement options is one challenge. **Isolation** caused by the pandemic is a major issue currently. Fear of continued outbreaks further compound the uncertainty.

Impacts to these services has a ripple effect across other community sectors, most impacting **families** whose loved ones depend on these

valuable services.

This sector's overall recovery challenges loom large. The community must come together as a whole to acknowledge and appreciate this sector's contributions to society. All must prioritize and remain focused on the safety, well-being, and care of our community's elders.

# Event Impacts



Older adults are the most vulnerable population to the pandemic. Prior to COVID-19, older adult services were all provided in-person. Many challenges faced by this sector existed prior to the event but have now been exacerbated.

Across Larimer County, some older adults reside in long-term care facilities, while many live at home. These residents living in-home are oftentimes located in the county's more rural areas, which causes its own isolation challenges.

Care providers continue to grapple with **staffing shortages** and individuals are impacted by a **lack of placement options**. This is causing

patient backlogs across many programs. Mandated (and necessary) restrictions in services are impacting the sector in multiple ways, including: social isolation, **behavioral health**, fear of outbreaks, lack of 'normalcy', and housing and food insecurity.

**Access to services** are a challenge for the socially marginalized and many in the rural, mountain communities. These collective stressors, coupled with the pandemic itself, present a huge challenge to long-term recovery efforts. Complications brought by the need to quarantine will be experienced until the pandemic is controlled.

**"Older persons have long been subject to inadequate protection of their human rights and overlooked in national policies and programs. COVID-19 recovery is an opportunity to set the stage for a more inclusive, equitable and age-friendly society." (United Nations Policy Brief)**

**Social isolation** has always been a large concern for this sector, one that has been magnified by the event. In-home services have been cut back, in addition to shopping / grocery assistance, and non-medical transportation.

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# Event Impacts



There has been an exceptional toll on older adults living in long-term care/congregate care settings due to social isolation. There needs to be cautious and thoughtful attempts to allow social interaction, along with increased mental health resources.

The limiting of visitors also impacts oversight agencies and the ombudsman program. The lack of oversight and the loss of individual voices to express care concerns increases the potential for elder abuse and under-reporting of concerns.

Virtual care solutions are attempting to mitigate the lack of in-person interactions, but some work cannot be performed remotely. Additionally, 'Zoom fatigue' is now an issue confronting everyone.

Care providers are experiencing financial impacts from this event, including the [loss of financial assistance](#) that many clients rely on. Compounding staffing issues, the loss of volunteers is a challenge as they tend to be older adults as well. There is worry the current influx of younger volunteers will have to step away as the school year begins.

[Limited day programs](#) are causing family caregiving burnout and worries about mental health for both older adults and their families. [Food programs](#), previously seeing an increased use, are now seeing more so. Hesitation to utilize [public transportation](#) during the event is compounding many needs. [Program closures](#) are also forcing permanent private care facility closures.

An additional challenge relates to [language barriers to marginalized communities](#), which may limit access to necessary services.

# Event Impacts



The concern now is how flu season will impact the sector and what additional needs may arise. The **re-opening of the economy** has correlated to a resurgence of outbreaks in long term care. The key exposure points into buildings are through staff and essential visitors, who have increased infections as they engage more throughout the community. There is worry concerning the opening of schools and how that may increase staff susceptibility to the virus. Continued school closures or re-closures may impact staff's ability to afford childcare and remain in their jobs.

The **lack of in-person assessments** will continue to be a detriment to this sector's care, as appropriate services may not be identified. In some cases where excessive services are prescribed, Medicaid dollars may not be reaching those most in need.

The sector has been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and thus stress is likely to continue and/or worsen over the next six months. **Staff stress levels are high**, due to the susceptibility of the population they serve, especially among long term care residents. Increased salary / hazard pay, support services, alternate funding, and incentives are needed to mitigate staffing needs.

Access to healthcare has always been a community challenge and will continue to be so in the future. The sector is made up of a diverse collection of organizations and collaboration will continue to be paramount.

# Unmet Needs



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*Expand community programs to combat social isolation*

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*Obtain widespread testing resources*

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*Acquire and fund PPE and disinfectant supplies*

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- ▶ Provide sense of safety for clients & staff
- ▶ Increase long-term care staffing
- ▶ Improve Larimer County COVID-19 messaging
- ▶ Provide mental health services for employees and residents
- ▶ Receive information on financial resources
- ▶ Provide mental health and community support services for caregivers
- ▶ Continue sector education relating to county / state health guidelines
- ▶ Mitigate supply chain disruptions
- ▶ Increased long term care placement options
- ▶ Provide support services for grandparents raising grandchildren
- ▶ Implement rapid re-housing program
- ▶ Increase day-program support relating to transportation and facilities
- ▶ Increase non-congregate housing for highest need populations
- ▶ Provide assistance with resident shopping, cleaning, and meal preparation
- ▶ Provide non-medical transportation resources
- ▶ Increase skilled and assisted living memory care placement options
- ▶ Improve access for residents to ombudsman
- ▶ Provide assistance with isolation and quarantine services

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# Housing Stability & Homelessness



The on-going pandemic and continued regional growth is contributing to decreased **housing stability**. This vital need impacts all segments of the community and can serve as a **stress multiplier**. Housing availability and affordability are two separate issues that are closely aligned.

Increased **homelessness** affects the community in a number of ways. This is not a new issue at hand, but one whose solutions have grown exceedingly difficult to implement

during the current pandemic event. This is caused by the importance of social distancing and following health mandates.

Continual efforts to support this sector are on-going, but recovery challenges posed by the virus have **increased the need** for additional resources and community support.

# Event Impacts



As the county has seen continual, nonstop growth over recent years, housing availability / affordability and homelessness have become top issues for the community.

The current pandemic is escalating this need, whose impacts are disproportionate. Marginalized and underserved populations are affected the hardest. This coupled with the fact that these groups are more likely to experience severe impacts from the virus results in the grim situation we are currently in.

As COVID-19 struck the community, providers were working to house northern Colorado's most at-risk persons. The sector was able to remain flexible and adaptive to meeting community gaps through multiple funding sources. Collaboration with partners allowed for both immediate response to the event and long-term planning.

There is a **deficiency in funding** and staffing resources to meet current needs. This includes a **shortage of shelter space** for some families / individuals and a **lack of outreach** abilities outside of Fort Collins.

**We need to work together as a community on resolving these issues, no one else will take care of it on our behalf. An indicator of our values as a community is whether the system increases barriers or works to minimize them. These barriers enable marginalization to occur, leading to inequitable access to resources necessary to adequately recover.**

Options to identify, support, and ensure the **health and safety of high-risk individuals** is presently inadequate. The closure of a community center where health screenings were provided is impacting the sector. **Lack of shelter space**, especially during the winter months is also a prime concern.

Challenges to **locating congregate sheltering space** are caused by unfounded fears that property owners have relating to housing homeless populations. This **stigma facing these marginalized populations** of our community needs to be challenged to ensure necessary services are available.

# Event Impacts



The issues of housing and homelessness influence the entire community, primarily affecting individual health and wellness. The [inability to maintain housing](#) affects the economy and increases to homelessness impact local businesses.

The lack of certainty, relating both to housing and the current pandemic, are large stressors to this sector.

Looking forward, the community is working to secure a congregate shelter location in time for the 20/21 winter season. [Day sheltering](#) locations are still unresolved for winter months.

The sector anticipates a higher need for rental assistance and eviction prevention, two needs previously expanding across the community prior to COVID-19. Case management has expanded its focus to those populations most at-risk to the virus.

# Unmet Needs



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*Identify (long-term) congregate locations for homeless*

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*Provide sense of safety for clients & staff*

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*Identify (long-term) day shelter locations for homeless*

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- ▶ Continue sector education relating to county / state health guidelines
- ▶ Increase sector case management staffing
- ▶ Receive information on financial resources
- ▶ Provide mental health services for support staff and community
- ▶ Address the stigma associated with locating sheltering facilities
- ▶ Implement rapid re-housing program
- ▶ Increase non-congregate housing for highest need populations
- ▶ Expand homelessness service levels outside of Fort Collins

# Early Learning & Childcare



The COVID-19 event is exacerbating the stressors impacting the **early learning and childcare** sector. A pre-existing workforce shortage coupled with the loss of staff due to school closures (for their own children) affected many in the community.

The risk of experiencing an outbreak and having to close a facility only adds to the **economic uncertainty** of these times. Every illness will need to be treated as if COVID-related, leading to additional staffing gaps.

This sector's overall recovery challenges loom large. The community must understand and appreciate this sector's contributions to society. All must **prioritize** and remain focused on the safety, well-being, and development of our **community's children**.

# Event Impacts



**Market failure** of the sector was a concern leading into the pandemic, as providers needed to operate at full capacity to remain viable. Organizations were experiencing operational losses and were forced to fundraise to remain operational. Most recent years experienced a net loss of licensed providers.

The main impact of the COVID-19 pandemic at the same time, there was a **shortage of space** for the youngest of the community. **Recruitment and retention of qualified educators** to meet licensing ratios was and continues to be a sector need.

The current economic event is unfortunately economic, with current distancing and health requirements further limiting organizational income. Additionally, **parents keeping kids at home** (due to safety or financial reasons) is also impacting revenue, forcing some closures.

The **lack of childcare access** continues to be a concern as women, in particular, are **leaving the workforce** in droves to stay home and support their children's school and care needs. This will have a long-term impact on our economic recovery, as well as for women in the workforce overall, worsening the **gender pay gap**.

Families of color are disproportionately bearing the burden of lack of access to care, including school-age care, and this will have an impact on long-term earning potential and pay gaps that currently exist.

Childcare challenges are currently being exacerbated by new **hybrid schedules**, where children may not be at care/school for the entire week or full day. Multiple children in a home having differing schedules further adds to this stress.

# Event Impacts



The concern now is how flu season will impact the sector and what additional needs may arise. Additionally, how K-12 schooling pans out (school-aged care) will directly impact available resources for this sector.

**Transportation barriers to accessing care** are a top issue for many families across the community.

**A childcare portal was developed by the county and released in September 2020, to mitigate future family / provider connections.**

The future demand for sector services is expected to increase as a vaccine is implemented.



Future stressors are anticipated to mirror those currently being experienced. Providers may begin to pivot services to school-aged care needs, to fill programs and increase revenue. This could have a negative impact on available pre-school resources.

**Mental health services**, for both providers and program patrons is a need that will continue through this event.

# Unmet Needs



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*Acquire and fund PPE and disinfectant supplies*

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*Expand workforce development opportunities*

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*Provide sense of safety for children, families, & staff*

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- ▶ Obtain widespread testing resources
- ▶ Provide mental health services for staff & clients
- ▶ Continue sector education relating to county / state health guidelines
- ▶ Receive information on financial resources
- ▶ Increase volunteer support to replace diminishing older adult volunteers
- ▶ Increase county's pre-school childcare capacity
- ▶ Mitigate supply chain disruptions
- ▶ Receive enhanced county-level nonprofit coordination and support efforts
- ▶ Educate businesses on need for workforce flexibility
- ▶ Finance hazard pay for providers

# Volunteer Agencies & Faith-Based Orgs



The on-going COVID-19 pandemic has hugely impacted the community's **volunteer agencies and faith-based organizations**. With many already struggling through the financial challenges common to this sector, the event has led to a large increase in community needs.

The **increased needs** shouldered by this sector are not always clear to the community as a whole, nor to the sector itself. This constantly

evolving list of services requires flexibility and strong coordination across the sector. Additionally, communication and collaboration with other community sectors is important to fully comprehend present needs and future trends.

This sector's long-term recovery **challenges are immense**. The community must come together as a whole to acknowledge and appreciate this sector's contributions to society.

# Event Impacts



The nonprofit sector in Larimer County is robust and includes numerous types. Some are faith-based organizations with broad services offered, while others are independent entities focused on providing needed community services. Oftentimes these services are focused on **at-risk and marginalized communities**.

Like all communities, the pre COVID-19 state in the nonprofit sector varied. In some respects, many organizations were very results oriented and continuously adapting to achieve stronger outcomes.

However, many nonprofits in the sector were cycling through programs each year without strong clarity of impact or community need

and **struggling financially**. These financial pressures are real and forecasting and scenario planning tools were and are still a need.

The strongest nonprofits lead with impact. Many nonprofits are growing in this area due to the urgency of the current state. The demands for services, in some areas, is great and the **resourcing to meet those demands is difficult**.

Due to the pandemic, some areas are not able to execute their mission due to **current restrictions** and at the same time are still experiencing **financial pressures**. Additionally, the volunteer base for many of these organizations comes from older adults, who may be **less likely or able to volunteer** due to this population's higher risk to COVID-19.

**It is more important than ever for every sector to take time to be fully aware of the pressures other sectors are facing. Instead of just assuming the nonprofit sector is equipped to fill unmet needs and meet new demands, the community will need to build new partnership capacity to align for impact.**

All areas of nonprofits are critical for a vibrant community. It is important to consider the critical role they play and how one would fill the gap if they weren't here.

# Event Impacts



Very little attention has been paid to the business side of nonprofit realities. They are businesses. They have had to move to remote, virtual working. Many are now securing operational loans for the first time.

Cascading impacts from other sectors are complex. The nonprofit sector is one that **impacts the entire community**, regardless if this is fully understood by broader community. Likewise, this sector is indirectly challenged by all stressors experienced by the whole community.

The community response has not been to **think of nonprofits as businesses**. This view has to change as they need the same support as any other business entity.

There is currently fatigue across the nonprofit sector due to **increased community needs** during the pandemic.

The extended economic outlook is not positive. Locally, forecasts are grim and readiness for the long-term impact on nonprofit financials needs to be developed. The **lack of ability to fundraise** is one of the largest impacts of COVID-19.

Community need is likely to grow for services in ways not imagined. Systems need to adapt and work together. Currently, the **response for the long-term is fragmented**.

Nonprofits are in survival mode. There is concern in some areas of the sector being labeled as not relevant during this time.

Social justice (racial, economic, etc) movements and awareness of structural inequalities have pushed many nonprofits to reflect and immediately adapt. Every participant in our social support systems are encouraged to do the same.

Doing so will require new skills. It will strain relationships as ways of thinking and operational processes are challenged. Self-accountability is vital. This sector performs important and difficult work and must be supported at every level.

*Additional event impacts are also included in the related Volunteer Agencies & Faith-Based Organizations section of this plan, highlighted in the Community Support Services Area of Focus.*

# Organizational Survey



What are some of your organization's mid-term recovery needs (through July 2021)?



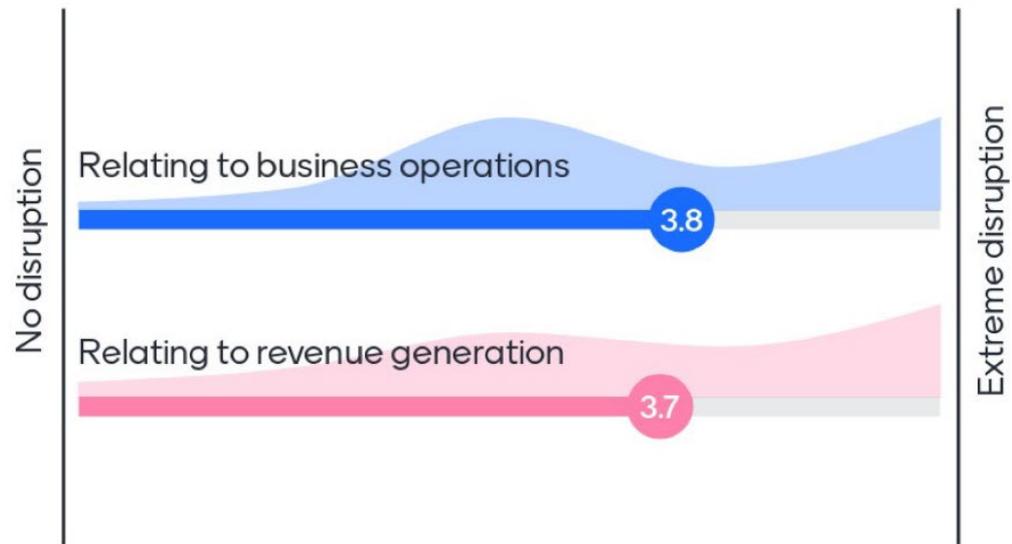
49 participants (taken 8/4-17/2020)



# Organizational Survey



How are current public health orders (masks, distancing, event limitations, etc) impacting your organization?



49 participants (taken 8/4-17/2020)

# Unmet Needs



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*Provide mental health services for staff*

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*Mitigate supply chain disruptions*

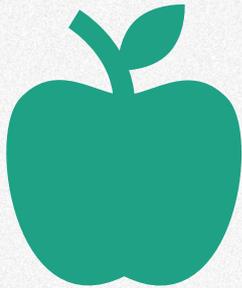
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*Provide sense of safety for community & staff*

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- ▶ Receive information on financial resources
- ▶ Access to forecasting and scenario planning tools
- ▶ Increase volunteer support to replace diminishing older adult volunteers
- ▶ Alternatives to replace congregate fundraising events
- ▶ Receive enhanced county-level nonprofit coordination and support efforts
- ▶ Acquire and fund PPE and disinfectant supplies

# Food & Essential Needs



COVID-19 has presented many challenges to providing **food and essential needs** to the community's most vulnerable. Fortunately, the availability and flexibility of resources helped to ensure this vital sector was able to **quickly recover** from the on-going event.

Efforts to support this sector are on-going and succeeding. **Continued community engagement** and education are vital to helping this sector fully recover.

# Event Impacts



Prior to the pandemic, meeting the food and essential needs of the community's vulnerable populations was an effort undertaken by a wide array of organizations. While not all individuals qualifying for these services took advantage of them, these programs were operating efficiently and serving those as intended.

Challenges brought about by the pandemic impacted the backbone of this sector, the numerous volunteers that graciously implement these various programs. As a majority of these individuals are older adults, many **no longer felt safe interacting** with the community as they previously had.

Also affected by COVID-19 were program participants, who also had concerns about contracting the virus. This coupled with **transportation difficulties** in light of the pandemic led to increased isolation for home bound clients. The need for online program registrations introduced a challenge for some with technological limitations.

Parents felt additional stressors as schools and day care facilities closed, potentially **eliminating vital meals and services** offered by these institutions. The need to address these childcare needs forced community members to step away from the workforce, further magnifying the need for food and necessities.

**For individuals and families in need, it is important that they understand that they may qualify for assistance through existing programs.**

To ensure volunteers and staff could continue their efforts in a safe manner, many operational changes had to be made. These did result in many challenges which were addressed by the generous community and sector contributors.

The sector believes it has the capacity necessary to continue supporting its community. On-going help to engage and educate vulnerable populations is vital for continued success.

# Unmet Needs



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*Mitigate supply chain disruptions*

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*Provide mental health services for support staff*

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*Provide sense of safety for community & staff*

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- ▶ Improve Larimer County COVID-19 messaging
- ▶ Increase utilization of available food program benefits
- ▶ Funding for rental, mortgage, and utility assistance resources

# Behavioral & Physical Health / Healthcare Access



The current pandemic is contributing to increased **behavioral health** needs across the entire community. These needs are expected to continue to expand, resulting in increasingly **stressed health systems** for the foreseeable future.

The **physical health** services has experienced a decline in routine health treatments. This lack of **preventative care** is delaying early intervention. A rise in the identification of future health conditions is expected

across the community, a potential cascading impact of this event.

**Healthcare access**, already an existing pressure, is being further impacted by the event. Decreased medical access during a pandemic can only lead to **increased healthcare needs**.

The sector's overall recovery challenges are surmountable, given adequate resources, time, and whole-community contributions and support.

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# Event Impacts



Prior to the pandemic, the health system was experiencing **wait lists to receive in-person services**. Many challenges faced by this sector existed prior to COVID-19, but this event has contributed to bringing these to light.

Currently, the use of **tele-health services** has seen a rapid expansion resulting in fewer wait times (but lacking the in-person interactions). Individuals are losing their economic, housing, and food security, in addition to health insurance.

These stressors, coupled with the pandemic, are causing people to **delay routine health needs**. Confusion regarding people's ability to seek treatment during the event also reduced preventative care. This is already leading to increased health issues caused by reduced early intervention. Stressors are also causing a rise in behavioral health across the community, in addition to increased cases of domestic violence.

**Without behavioral health, there is no health.** Impacts from this sector ripple through the entire community.

As part of the response to the pandemic, FEMA has coordinated with the state to develop and fund locally implemented **crisis counseling programs** for residents struggling with stress and anxiety. This needed program is currently forced to provide virtual support which is not as effective as in-person services.

# Event Impacts



The sector expects to continue to see tele-health as the preferred vehicle for care, which has proven successful. It is expected that 60% of services will be provided virtually. As a sector, it is vital to continually advocate for this service. Of concern is the **lack of broadband** access to many of the county's rural areas, where higher concentrations of elderly residents reside.

The concern now is how flu season will impact the sector and what additional needs may arise. Additionally, how K-12 schooling pans out (school-aged care) will directly impact many of the community's families and subsequently its overall health.

**It is important for our community to collectively look out for one another. Neighbors helping neighbors will be our greatest tool during recovery.**

For individuals without or who have lost health insurance, it is important that they understand that they may **qualify for assistance** through existing programs. Issues relating to the community's deferred routine health treatments can also impact the service providers, through reduced copays (income) and the resulting service impacts.

Access to healthcare has always been a community challenge and will continue to be so in the future. This is not something that the county can address alone and will require support from state and federal resources.

# Unmet Needs



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*Provide mental health services for support staff and the community*

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*Receive information on financial resources*

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*Provide sense of safety for clients & staff*

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- ▶ Mitigate supply chain disruptions
- ▶ Obtain widespread testing resources
- ▶ Support and build off of Estes Park's "kindness program"
- ▶ Improve Larimer County COVID-19 messaging
- ▶ Concentrate health resources for marginalized populations
- ▶ Increase support for children with access and functional needs and their families
- ▶ Provide access to healthcare coverage
- ▶ Provide social and emotional support services for school kids
- ▶ Preparing for isolation and quarantine services
- ▶ Receive contact tracing resources
- ▶ Reduce the impacts to tele-health from funding cancellations



# Identification



The identification of unmet needs stemming from the pandemic was accomplished by leveraging the collective networks of the Larimer Recovery Collaborative. **Over 170 needs were identified and evaluated** over the course of the planning process. Projects were then identified to best meet these needs.

All needs were cross-walked across all sectors to determine synergies and to help identify primary stakeholders. The full list of these needs are documented across each of the community sector profiles in this plan.

 <b>LARIMER RECOVERY COLLABORATIVE</b>		● Primary Impact ○ Cascading Impact															
		Pre-K-12	Higher Education	County Operation & Programs	Infrastructure, Connectivity & Transportation	Aging Adult Services	Housing Stability & Homelessness	Early Learning & Childcare	Voluntary Agencies & Faith-based Organizations	Food & Essential Needs	Physical & Behavioral Health & Healthcare Access	Agricultural & Farming	Hospitality, Visitor Experience & Outdoor Recreation	Workforce & Employment	Nonprofit Support	Small Business Support	Economic Development
		Government, Education & Policy				Community Support Services					Workforce, Small Business & Economic Development						
II-1	UNMET NEED																
69	Increase utilization of SNAP (food program) benefits									○	●	○					
70	Need to replace rental, mortgage, and utility assistance resources.							○			●	○		○			
71	Determining what information is the right type of data to track (Public Facing / Internal) - Health/Economic/School Operations/VOAD Services/Local Hot Spots/Business Compliance	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
72	Need to coordinate between data tracking groups both from an analysis and response perspective (HHS, Larimer County IT, Economic Workforce)	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
73	Larimer County IT had proof of concept for data display that has some no where	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
74	Target relief to those micro/small business most impacted who were unable to get federal assistance												●			●	
75	Mask Compliance / Enforcement	●	●	●									●		●	●	
76	Widespread COVID-19 testing	●	●	●	○	●	○	●	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○
77	Concentrating health resources in minority/disadvantaged populations	○	○			○				○	●						
78	Assistance with increased sanitation/social distancing costs for businesses												●		●	●	
79	Business need rental assistance as sales continue to decline												●		●	●	
80	Supply chain disruption			●		●		●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	
81	Business needs access to cash either via Grants or Loans												●		●	●	

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# Prioritization



Prioritization of the identified unmet needs focused first on identifying those that are essential. Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory is helpful to reference. Within the theory's five tiers of human needs, those lower down the pyramid must be satisfied before individuals can attend to those needs higher up.

**Physiological needs** are the most basic and include things such as food, shelter, sleep, and clothing. **Safety needs** are the next tier and can include personal security, employment, health, and property.

As Larimer County begins its long-term recovery from COVID-19, these **essential needs** will receive the highest prioritization.

A second theory utilized by the collaborative to further prioritize needs was the triple bottom line approach. This sustainability framework allowed the collaborative to focus on the actual projects that would meet these unmet needs.

Those projects that would most benefit the community as a whole were given priority. This was accomplished by considering the collective **economic, environmental, and social benefits** of a project.

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# Funding



Utilizing a wide array of funding sources will be critical to implementation of this plan. As mentioned later in this document, the [Coronavirus Relief Fund \(CVRF\)](#) - coupled with local dollars - were the first funding sources leveraged to begin addressing the community's unmet needs.

Looking forward, a wide collection of funding resources will be continually evaluated. Efforts will be taken to ensure available funding is maximized and that all potential sources are evaluated.

Finding funding for some unmet needs may be more difficult than others, as each potential resource comes with its own requirements and limitations. [Evaluating each funding source individually](#) across all remaining needs will allow funding to be best directed.

In some cases it may be more feasible to meet needs through pilot projects or a phased approach. Current county efforts focused on expanding broadband access is an example of this approach.



# Lessons Learned

*Success Stories*

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*Opportunities to Improve*

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# Success Stories



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*"Neighbors helping neighbors is a theme we've seen across all sectors of the community."*

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*"The community's ability to creatively adapt to the current 'normal'."*

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*"The Town of Estes Park's Kindness Program."*

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- ▶ Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster have been instrumental in providing ongoing services to community members through their organizational missions.
- ▶ The NoCo Recovers website providing a one-stop-shop for many individuals seeking COVID-19 resources and information.
- ▶ The North 40 Mountain Alliance's food pantry is a great example of neighbors coming together to meet community needs.
- ▶ Team Rubicon's partnership with local food banks.
- ▶ Town of Estes Park's successes in preparing for school closure for their most at-risk students
- ▶ Virtual engagement is increasing public participation.
- ▶ The reduced environmental impacts caused by less printing and the forced move toward digital.

# Success Stories

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*Additional success stories relevant to Government, Education, & Policy include :*

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*"Our culture of flexibility / adaptability has made it possible to continue to provide services, even those we haven't provided before."*

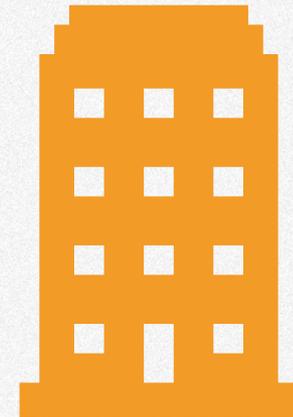
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*"A tremendous upside to the pandemic is that we were forced to learn about working remotely. Providing a supportive environment for remote workers and making lemonade out of the lemons is likely to result in a revamp of our Facilities Master Plan."*

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- ▶ The efficiencies realized with new work from home policies.
- ▶ The ability for employees to work remotely.
- ▶ Districts utilizing at-risk educators for virtual learning services.
- ▶ The existing cloud enabled services allowed for success of remote work.
- ▶ Decoupling of ancillary school services to ensure continued food access.
- ▶ Providing computers / 'hot spots' to students across the county.
- ▶ The increased resources to support Health Contact Tracing and Testing was a huge benefit to help our county response to suppress the virus.
- ▶ The use of electronic forms and signatures has enabled better support to offenders.



- ▶ The Pretrial App for intake and signing of terms and conditions helped reduce required in-person contact.
- ▶ Criminal justice offenders benefitted from access to tele-health.
- ▶ Coordination with school districts enabled development of a plan to allow for a full return to in-person instruction this fall, along with a rollback plan.
- ▶ Virtual engagement is increasing public participation.

# Success Stories

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*Additional success stories relevant to Workforce, Small Business, & Economic Development include:*

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*Development of the Public Health variance plan for safety regulations, which was one of the first approved by the state.*

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*Development of the NoCo Recovers program, providing a centralized resource for recovery information.*

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- ▶ Business operational adaptations to meet all regulations and continue to operate in the community.
- ▶ The modifications to uninsured aid programs to expand eligibility to gig workers and others who were previously disqualified
- ▶ Continued expansion of the Talent 2.0 Regional Workforce Strategy, which earned an Excellence Award from the International Economic Development Council.

# Success Stories

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*Additional opportunities to improve relevant to Community Support Services include :*

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*"Tele-health and tele-behavioral health have become the norm, and very successfully for most, especially teens and youth. Remote assessment and intervention is a viable option for the delivery of patient care."*

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*The Early Childhood Council of Larimer County launched a [childcare referral portal](#) on 9/1 for families to identify and immediately access open childcare and school-aged care.*

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*"The partners providing shelter, day shelter, services, and health screenings."*

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- ▶ The successful collaboration among partners.
- ▶ There have been many adjustments to bolster existing support mechanisms for Immigrants.
- ▶ Addressing the first outbreak in a long-term care facility in Colorado.
- ▶ The Larimer County Colorado Prepared Empowered Expert Residents (CO-PEER) program, the second of its kind in the nation and the first of its kind in the state.
- ▶ Providing funding to several community agencies for rental assistance and eviction prevention.
- ▶ Many community agencies that serve older adults have adapted to tele-working.
- ▶ The health department has built relationships with staff where there have been outbreaks of COVID-19.



- ▶ The increased efficiencies of working remotely.
- ▶ The temporary congregate shelter at Northside Aztlan Community Center.
- ▶ The community site for isolation (W. Myrtle site hosted by Homeward Alliance and the Health District).
- ▶ The non-congregate shelter program facilitated by the homeless services provider network, the health district, and the City of Fort Collins.

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# Opportunities to Improve - Equity

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*Recovery is an opportunity to address equity and disparities that have long been prevalent in our community.*

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Inequity and disparities, as a result of systemic racism, have been instilled in the fabric and culture of our community long before the onset of this event. However, the COVID-19 pandemic, like many disasters, illuminates how these disparities heavily impact and attribute to social vulnerability in our community.

It is important to recognize that people themselves are not inherently vulnerable. When discussing or assessing social vulnerability, the mistakes of using this term as a label

and placing a deficit lens on people and their ability to act are often made. However, vulnerability instead occurs when a [system that an individual is part of fails to provide equitable access](#) to a resource or service needed for that individual to survive, respond to, and recover from an event (*EM Equity & Inclusion Strategic Plan*).

For example, if emergency alerts are only provided in English, this does not mean that an individual who does not speak English does not understand their responsibility to take action. Instead, it is that they exist in a system that does not equitably provide a resource which gives them the adequate ability to respond appropriately.

[This event exacerbated disparities that already existed](#) in our community for historically marginalized and underserved groups including our Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) community, People who are Aging, People Experiencing



Homelessness, and People with Disabilities. However, this was disproportionately higher for our Latinx, Immigrant, and Non-English-Speaking community. In an Administrative Matters presentation to the Larimer County Board of County Commissioners on July 21, 2020, the Larimer County Public Health Director presented on data that highlighted this disparity (<https://youtu.be/CxkLDdfe0eg>).

# Opportunities to Improve - Equity



According to COVID-19 case data at the time of publishing:

- ▶ The Latinx community made up 22.2% of total positive COVID-19 cases, despite only making up 11% of the total county population.
- ▶ Latinx cases accounted for approximately 603 cumulative cases per 100,000 residents, compared to only 162 cases per 100,000 residents for people who identified as white.

This group is considered one of the groups most susceptible to disruption during a crisis for the following reasons:

- ▶ Language barriers are prevalent and [limited translation services restrict the effectiveness of communication plans](#). Additionally, translated materials are often not pushed out as quickly as initial English communications. This delay inhibits the ability for this part of our community to act in a timely manner.
- ▶ Latinx community members are frequently essential front-line workers in service, manufacturing and production industry where the virus has been more transmissible.
- ▶ Lack of safety net resources and unemployment options can increase likelihood of choosing to go to work vs. isolate at home without income.
- ▶ The Latinx community is marginalized by anti-Immigrant rhetoric and stigma.
- ▶ Latinx families may [have less access to health care, have lower health literacy](#), and may be uninsured or underinsured.

- ▶ They may have limited access to technology, higher speed internet or have fewer opportunities to work from home. Additionally, students may have limited access to technology for remote learning.
- ▶ Many resources [for basic needs assistance lack cultural and linguistic attunement](#) or have requirements that are barriers for this community.
- ▶ Many of Larimer County's Latinx, Immigrant community members live in mobile home parks that prohibit outside information dissemination, and have controlling and oppressive practices.

We must assess how governmental, national and regional institutional systems, including Larimer County, continue to contribute to the disparity. While it is true that the disparity in this event can possibly be attributed to the fact that many members of the Latinx, Immigrant, and Non-English-Speaking community were essential workers in places where transmission is more likely to occur such as healthcare industry, agricultural/meat-packing industries, and retail industries, this event also

# Opportunities to Improve - Equity



illuminated failure points from an institutional perspective.

This includes such areas as:

- ▶ Information and outreach not being widely available and distributed in dual language. Additionally, a lack of cultural attunement and understanding of how information is shared and disseminated in the Latinx community results in a disconnect between Larimer County as a government entity and the

community. Such things as fear and distrust result in the fact that the Latinx community is **highly unlikely to seek government resources for information**. They will instead seek trusted, culturally attuned, and community-rooted sources for information, and may utilize different social platforms, such as WhatsApp, and not the platforms typically used for disseminating information.

- ▶ Lack of integration into networks and relationships with trusted, community-rooted organizations that support the Latinx community, and the fact that only certain departments may be well-connected in a silo.
- ▶ **Insufficient levels of pre-disaster outreach and engagement** with Latinx community to help better educate and inform the community of how to be prepared, where to seek information and resources, how to seek shelter and evacuation support, as well as recovery support.

In Recovery efforts, the following areas in which equity gaps were illuminated include:

- ▶ A delay in data collection and surveys conducted in Spanish which was not done in as timely of a manner as those conducted in English.
- ▶ Lack of networks at the onset of the event made it difficult to quickly launch the Community Support and Equity Advisory Board. This **board continues to have gaps in representation** from members of the impacted community and persons with lived experience, as well as full representation from all underserved communities in Larimer County.

While there are multiple efforts in place at Larimer County to help improve these areas, this crisis made it clear that many of these efforts are happening in a siloed approach. Integration of these efforts and improved collaboration across departments would greatly increase the effectiveness of these programs. Additionally, **Larimer County needs to greatly expand the community-led approach** to these efforts.

We can help drive the movement and progress of these efforts and programs,

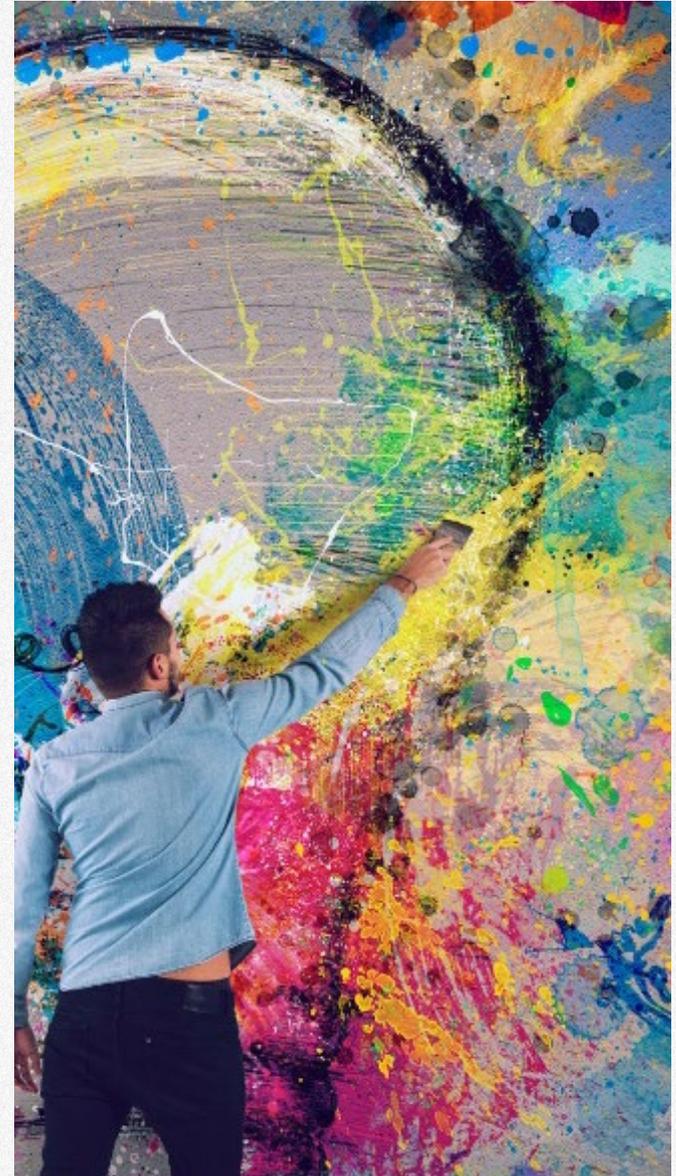
# Opportunities to Improve - Equity



by elevating persons with lived experience and impacted community members into leadership roles. We can develop better cultural attunement, [significantly increase our awareness of the true impacts to our community](#), and more effectively direct resources where they will have the greatest result.

Larimer County in Recovery and beyond, should seek to improve equity as aforementioned, and in the following ways:

- ▶ Improving information and outreach being provided in dual language, minimizing delay between English and translated materials being pushed out to the community
- ▶ Improving networks and [relationships with trusted, community rooted organizations](#) that work with the Latinx community to better disseminate information and resources. This includes improving the ways in which Larimer County supports these organizations, both financially and in the form of resources. Not simply depending on them to provide assistance to the community, when many of them rely on donated funds and resources
- ▶ Improving the level of cultural attunement at the county, for example, improving understanding of the platforms and networks that are utilized by the Latinx community for sharing of information, and not cyclically assuming that the Latinx community will seek traditional government resources for information



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# Opportunities to Improve - Equity



- ▶ Provide greater emphasis and priority on conducting culturally attuned outreach and education efforts related to disaster preparedness and awareness of resources available to our community
- ▶ Continuing to facilitate the LRC Community Support and Equity advisory board, and identify solutions to ensure the sustainability of this group beyond recovery

- ▶ Revise the Larimer County Emergency Management Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan to better incorporate the feedback and needs of the impacted community. Reevaluate the goals of this plan and align them with the lessons learned from this event

We have to understand and acknowledge that while improvements have been made at the local level, **inequity is deeply rooted in our institutions** across the country and has been for centuries. Larimer County, as an institution, is not immune. While some barriers that contribute to inequity are obvious, many barriers are less visible, and as a result continuing to improve these systems will take daily, continuous, and committed efforts. This is something that cannot be done by Larimer County, or any institution, alone. This requires a **collective, system-wide, and collaborative effort** in which one another is held accountable in their commitment to eliminate inequity in our system.

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*Larimer County is working on innovative solutions to the unmet need of equitable access to Emergency Alerts.*

*The inability to send emergency alerts in multiple languages is an issue with the tools and resources available to Larimer County. Translation services or software that can accurately translate an emergency message, immediately, do not exist to the best of our knowledge. Current options, such as Google Translate, can be inaccurate and are therefore not used.*

*Messages will only be received in the language they are sent, regardless of the phone language settings. They are not translated by the phone itself and Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) messages must be input by the sender in the various languages. Some alerts can be pre-planned and translated, but the majority of emergency alerts are unique and must be sent rapidly. While translation services have been used, the lack of resources for readily available, real-time translation creates vast disparities in communications.*

*The translation work of the Immigrant & Refugee Center of Northern Colorado, will allow basic, pre-written messages in other languages, to be sent in the future. However, Everbridge, our current alerting system, has a critical functionality missing which will not allow the sending of one alert in multiple languages. Possible solutions are being explored and continued work with Everbridge for resolution on this issue is a priority.*

# Opportunities to Improve

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*"It is more important than ever for every sector to take time to be fully aware of the pressures other sectors are facing."*

---

*"Virtual engagement experienced a lack of diversity. Virtual opportunities have only increased the breadth of participation, not the depth."*

---

*"There is so much potential to shift our response focus to recovery AND intentionally redesign our systems for equity and impact."*

---

- ▶ The coordination of unmet needs identification.
- ▶ Better utilize the input and experience from marginalized communities to help create community resilience, supporting with resources and information to effect a sustainable change and mitigate negative impacts in the future.
- ▶ Identify the Latinx community as prioritized group for recovery. Data has determined this part of our community was disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ▶ Providing access to technology and broadband for underserved communities.



- ▶ The event has highlighted under-resourced sectors.
- ▶ Impacts to workforce due to lack of child / school-aged care.
- ▶ The reduction or lack of collaborative communications
- ▶ There were too many platforms and technologies to juggle.
- ▶ Addressing university infection spikes as students return.
- ▶ Do not expect that someone else will take care of it.

# Opportunities to Improve

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*Additional opportunities to improve relevant to Government, Education, & Policy include :*

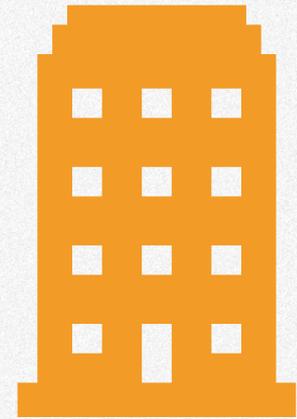
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*"The lack of internet connectivity countywide, especially in rural areas, was a significant issue for remote workers and students."*

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- ▶ Making operational changes based on lessons learned
- ▶ The need to address the large number of 'ghost students' following the closure of in-person learning.
- ▶ Addressing duplicative planning, such as multiple agencies developing plans to acquire PPE individually versus regionally, which led to difficulties in obtaining PPE.
- ▶ Groups relying on the same resource. For example, various groups were working on childcare issues and with every group writing plans, it appeared to create conflicts.
- ▶ Lack of medical transport options for seniors and those with access and functional needs.
- ▶ Tele-health cannot occur in more rural areas due to lack of internet capacity
- ▶ The need to resolve software incompatibilities.
- ▶ Pre-training was lacking for technologies being used.
- ▶ Higher education's over-reliance on in-person learning.



# Opportunities to Improve

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*Additional opportunities to improve relevant to **Government, Education, & Policy** include :*

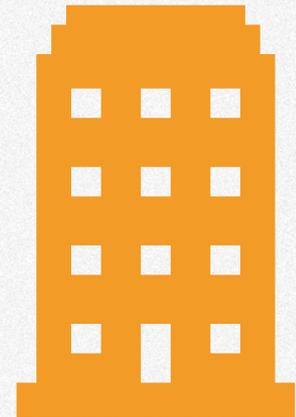
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*"The importance of data and sharing information in an open and transparent way has proven to be a critical, and underestimated, need."*

---

- ▶ The face-to-face interaction between offenders and staff is crucial for success and remote supervision should not be a new method of business for our operations.
- ▶ The use of office space and our overall county footprint can evolve
- ▶ Higher education providers are considering offering credentialing programs and certificate programs to get people certified in job-related skills.
- ▶ Addressing record levels of visitation (and traffic) to park facilities.
- ▶ Weaknesses in systems center around the availability of technology and connectivity in a virtual setting.
- ▶ Library system closures created added stress for those without access to internet at home.



# Opportunities to Improve

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*Additional opportunities to improve relevant to Workforce, Small Business, & Economic Development include :*

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*Continue to expand outreach to underserved communities*

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*Leverage opportunities presented by the pandemic as it serves as a change accelerator for the entire economy*

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- ▶ Improve dissemination of public health messaging
- ▶ Improve availability of public health messaging to businesses



# Opportunities to Improve

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*Additional opportunities to improve relevant to **Community Support Services** include :*

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*"The funding being directed to early childhood education from the state and federal level remains inadequate to sustain many of these businesses during staggering financial losses."*

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- ▶ Post-event response efforts were fragmented.
- ▶ Do not assume that the nonprofit sector is equipped to fill unmet needs and meet new demands. The community needs to build new partnership capacity to handle these impacts.





# Next Steps

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*Short-Term Next Steps*

*Long-Term  
Implementation*

*Continued Engagement*

*Monitoring & Metrics*

# Short-Term Next Steps



The first major steps towards fulfilling Larimer County's unmet needs focused on the essential needs of the community. Through the [Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security \(CARES\) Act](#) the State of Colorado provided funding utilizing the [Coronavirus Relief Fund \(CVRF\)](#).

These CVRF monies, coupled with local funding, were leveraged by the county and its municipalities to implement a number of recovery efforts.

These efforts spanned a range of community sectors detailed in this plan. Some of the [major needs](#) which were met focused on the following:

- ▶ Rental, utility, & food assistance
- ▶ VOAD support
- ▶ Childcare assistance
- ▶ PIVOT Larimer County program
- ▶ Larimer Revolving Loan Fund
- ▶ Broadband pilot projects
- ▶ Keep NOCO Open program

Following is a list of additional specific project types that were funded through the CVRF:

- ▶ Small business support loans
- ▶ Re-Ignite the Economy & plan
- ▶ Targeted economic development
- ▶ EDA grant – local match
- ▶ People experiencing homelessness support
- ▶ Eviction prevention
- ▶ Transportation
- ▶ Community engagement & outreach
- ▶ OEM staffing support
- ▶ Equity-focused organizations

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# Long-Term Implementation



Looking forward, remaining unmet needs will continue to be tracked and updated as the county continues to respond to and recover from the COVID-19 event. As additional funding opportunities arise, they will be referenced to remaining unmet needs to determine the best use of those funds.

While [continuing to monitor](#) existing and identifying additional community needs, metrics will be tracked to determine if priorities need to be re-evaluated. Additionally, the [Larimer Recovery Collaborative](#) will also monitor existing and future community planning efforts to ensure alignment and to avoid any strategic conflicts.

It is also important that the collaborative continues to support those projects and activities already implemented.

[Reignite Our Economy](#) is one such program to highlight. Over the next year, this effort will focus on collecting data from small businesses relating to pandemic impacts. These efforts will help to focus future recovery efforts for this sector.

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# Continued Engagement



Continued engagement with the community is vital to achieving long-term recovery success. As the COVID-19 pandemic is still on-going, this engagement will ensure that the community's unmet needs are fully understood as they evolve.

There will be continued support and facilitation of the LRC Community Support and Equity advisory board's development and sustainability.

The Collaborative will continue to identify and implement solutions which elevate impacted community members into leadership roles in the recovery structure.

The Larimer Recovery Collaborative is in the process of filling a new position for an equity focused [Community Engagement & Communications Coordinator](#). Amongst many others, primary duties will be focused on community involvement activities, including:

- ▶ Managing all communications, education, and outreach of the Larimer Recovery Collaborative
- ▶ Assessing the needs of the community
- ▶ Coordinating community-led, equity-centric recovery communications and programs
- ▶ Information dissemination across a wide range of media platforms
- ▶ Continued coordination across the Collaborative



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*The Community Engagement & Communications Coordinator will assess the needs of the community and will coordinate equity-centric recovery communications that support the regional partners and agencies within the Larimer Recovery Collaborative.*

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# Monitoring & Metrics

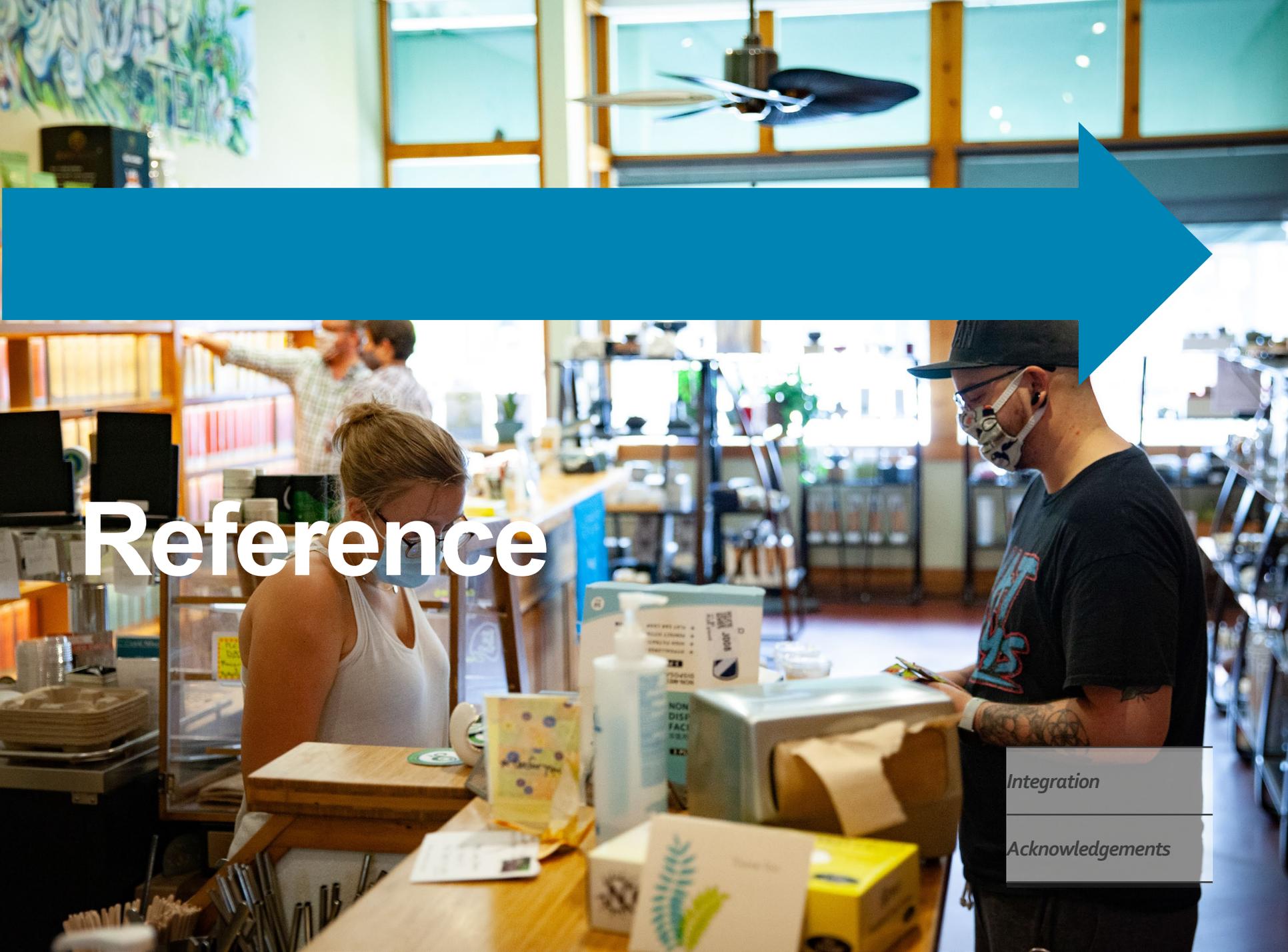


Concurrent to development of this plan, Larimer County is in the process of building a [Recovery Dashboard](#) to publicly track related metrics. This recovery tool will define what the specific metrics are that will be tracked over the course of recovery.

Additionally, the [Larimer Recovery Collaborative](#) will evaluate progress made towards this plan on a semi-annual basis. These efforts are scheduled to align with other

planning efforts and will occur in December and May of each year going forward.

Duties for the new Community Engagement & Communications Coordinator will also focus on continual monitoring of community needs relating to the pandemic.



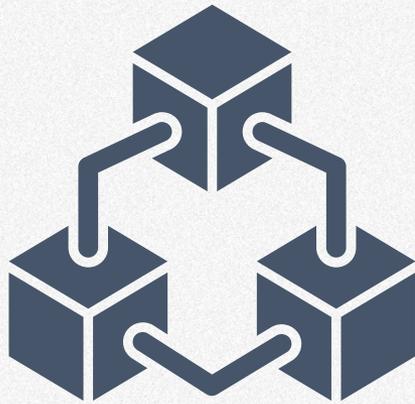
# Reference

*Integration*

*Acknowledgements*

# Integration

*The following plans, studies, and resources were consulted during the development of this document.*



- ▶ Larimer County Resiliency Program
- ▶ Larimer Connects Program
- ▶ Reignite Our Economy: Economic Recovery & Rebuilding Plan
- ▶ Larimer County Comprehensive Plan
- ▶ Larimer County Hazard Mitigation Plan
- ▶ Larimer County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan
- ▶ Larimer County Climate Smart
- ▶ Larimer County Emergency Management Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan
- ▶ Recovery Collaborative COVID-19 Recovery Equity Framework
- ▶ Larimer County Mental Health Matters
- ▶ Larimer County COVID-19 Suppression Plan
- ▶ Larimer County Unmet Needs & Fragility Study
- ▶ Larimer County Broadband Study
- ▶ Colorado Resiliency Office
- ▶ Emergency Management as a Complex Adaptive System: Preparing for Colorado's Future
- ▶ From Fragile to Agile: A Systems Approach to Resilience



# Acknowledgements

*Special thanks to the following for the creation of this community recovery plan.*

- ▶ Larimer Recovery Collaborative (LRC)
- ▶ LRC Community Board
- ▶ Larimer County Board of Commissioners
- ▶ General Public
- ▶ Larimer County
- ▶ City of Fort Collins
- ▶ City of Loveland
- ▶ Town of Estes Park
- ▶ United Way





**Afterword**

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# Where We are Now

**December 1, 2020:** As of the publication date of this COVID-19 Long-term Recovery Plan, Larimer County and the world are still grappling with the ongoing pandemic.

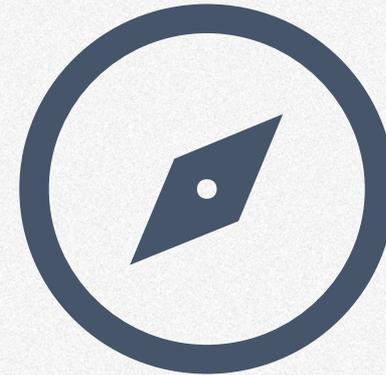
The Larimer Recovery Collaborative (LRC) continues to work towards identifying and resolving remaining unmet needs related to COVID-19, as highlighted in the [Next Steps](#) chapter of this document. Currently, impacts from the pandemic are the same as in August, but their continued existence coupled with the upcoming winter and holiday seasons will prove challenging to all sectors.

Fortunately, [many initial community needs were able to be met](#) through available funding and close coordination between the county and its municipalities.

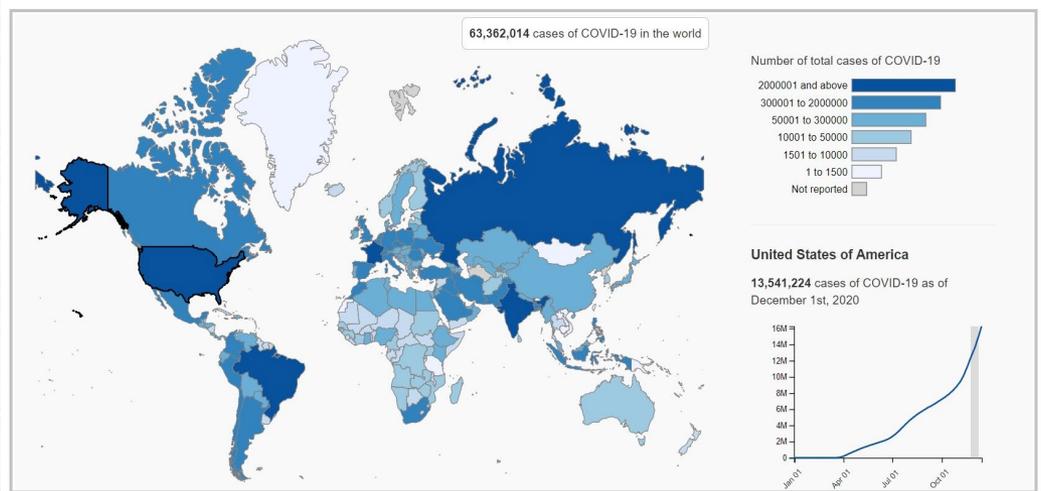
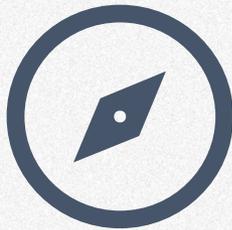
While some unmet needs still exist relating to the pandemic, inequity and disparities highlighted during this disaster's response and recovery efforts have proven to be the largest community need to address over the long-term.

There is tremendous opportunity to now focus on these broader issues. Reducing the community's collective social vulnerability is the most impactful step that can be taken to improve resiliency. These efforts will enable Larimer County to become better prepared for the next disaster event, while addressing larger societal issues that existed long before the pandemic.

The following pages provide an updated snapshot of the current state of the pandemic.



# Where We are Now



As of December 1<sup>st</sup>, the global total COVID-19 cases have reached over 63.3 million. Of those cases, over 1.4 million people have died.

Across the US, over 268,000 people have died and there are over 13.5 million cases,

In Colorado, there have been over 230,000 cases and over 3,100 deaths.

In Larimer County, over 10,000 cases have been reported. There have been 75 deaths.

Currently two companies, Pfizer and Moderna, have [vaccines in clinical trials and moving towards approval by the FDA](#). If approved, delivery is expected to begin mid-December. These two companies are expected to manufacture a combined 40.5 million doses in December.

The vaccines will be administered in tiers, based on need and risk. As of the writing of this plan, the tiers were not yet determined, but the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommended, as interim guidance, that both health care personnel and residents of long-term care facilities be offered the COVID-19 vaccine in the initial phase of the vaccination program.

# Where We are Now

The Colorado dial framework continues to be a tool for community education on current [recommendations to control the level of risk](#) in day-to-day activities and operations.

The metrics currently used to determine level status are:

- ▶ New cases: How much the virus is circulating in a county.
- ▶ Percent positivity: Whether there is sufficient COVID-19 testing to capture the level of virus transmission.
- ▶ Impact on hospitalizations: Whether hospitalizations are increasing, stable, or declining.

On November 17<sup>th</sup>, the dial framework was updated, [adding a purple level, "Extreme Risk,"](#) which is based on hospital capacity and shortages of staff and/or PPE.



Larimer County moved to RED on Tuesday, Nov. 24 at 5 p.m. Counties change levels based on the metrics and work with the state to ensure unique local factors are considered.

On November 24<sup>th</sup>, Larimer County was placed in the "Severe Risk" red level. As of December 1<sup>st</sup>, [the County remains in that red level.](#)

The red level is decided based on a county having:

- ▶ More than 15% positivity rates.
- ▶ 350+ cases per 100,000.
- ▶ Greater than two new COVID-19 hospital admissions per day.

The red level has restrictions on gatherings of any size. Any school higher than 5<sup>th</sup> grade is recommended to be remote, including higher education.

Indoor dining remains closed, along with bars and any indoor events or entertainment. Remote work for offices is highly encouraged and high risk populations are advised to stay at home.



*Professional planning services provided by  
Synergy Disaster Recovery*

