



Introduction

Economic resiliency and recovery go hand in hand because recovery is not linear; it's a process, and while you are in response or recovery mode for one economic disruption, you may be planning to mitigate the impacts of another.

Given California's severe weather and ever-present risk of earthquakes, fires, floods, and other potential economic disruptions, state and local government leaders have to include risk assessment, preparedness, mitigation, resiliency, response, and recovery as part of their regular work. In particular, economic developers and their networks are charged with reducing economic risk by becoming first responders for our local businesses before, during, and after a disaster or a downturn — making them an experienced resource to assist with risk assessment, resiliency planning, and recovery.

Why Communities Invest in Economic Development



With this in mind, the U.S. Economic Development Administration provided funding to the California Association for Local Economic Development (CALED) to create the *Economic Development Recovery and Resiliency Playbook*, a guide for jurisdictions to help ensure a more resilient community in the face of economic disruption – regardless of the cause.



Economic development is the creation of wealth from which community benefits are realized. It is more than a jobs program, it's an investment in growing your economy and enhancing the prosperity and quality of life for all residents.

Scan below to learn more and read the *Economic Development Recovery and Resiliency Playbook*:



ABOUT CALED

The California Association for Local Economic Development (CALED) is California's premier economic development association and one of the largest economic development associations in the nation. CALED's 800+ members work hard to help businesses thrive so they can create economic opportunity for all and grow state and local economies. Since its creation in 1980, CALED has led the way in teaching economic developers, local elected officials, and state representatives the value of economic development and how it is used to grow businesses, generate revenue to expand the local economy, and pay for the services that residents require. For more information, visit caled.org.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Economic Development Recovery and Resiliency Playbook



The Economic Development Recovery & Resiliency Cycle

Being prepared to respond to economic disruption, planning for recovery, and fostering resiliency creates a strong, sustainable local economy that provides economic opportunity for all and improves residents' quality of life. A community may be in multiple phases of the cycle simultaneously.



Be Strategic: Clearly Define Your Economic Goals, Before and After a Disaster

Economic development efforts must be intentional, strategic, and focused on your community's unique needs. Goal setting is critical to an economic development strategy so everyone participating in the process has the same vision of what success looks like, along with the metrics to benchmark progress. Goals create a baseline for measurement, allow the community to progress toward recovery, and help define what resiliency looks like. Economic development goal setting should be an ongoing, measurable process that is constantly evaluated.

Including underserved communities is critical to the strategic planning process and to creating economic resiliency. Establish and foster strong partnerships with all community members and stakeholders. Their help is essential in determining important goals that are relevant to the entire community. Agencies and organizations that have built trust with local underserved residents can act as liaisons to ensure representation and equity.

8 Considerations for Goal Setting



Examining Infrastructure Systems and Improvements for Resilient Communities

Planning and strategizing requires understanding your community's infrastructure needs, the connection between economic development and infrastructure, status of current infrastructure, ongoing potential deficiencies, and needed improvements.

Structural infrastructure includes roads, bridges, the electrical power grid, water, and wastewater treatment. Because successful businesses require adequate infrastructure services, a community's infrastructure status is critical; however, both structural and social infrastructure must be in place to improve a community's economic wellness. Key social infrastructure systems include broadband services that can deliver internet access for all residents; adequate, safe, and affordable housing; equitable access to transportation services, child care and pre-school education; and access to health care services.



Understanding Your Economic Base Through Cluster Analysis, Business Size, and Supply Chains

Data points are an essential foundation that inform economic development strategies, policies, implementation actions, and other responses. Useful data include employment forecasts, cluster analysis, supply chain data, and more.

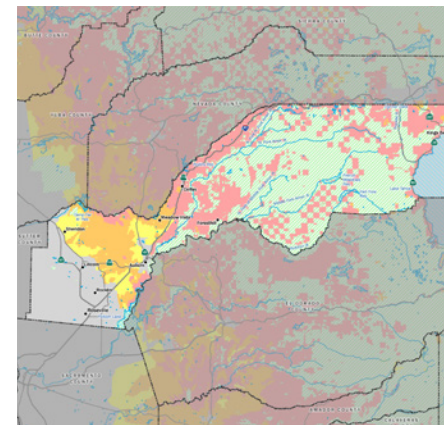
Data can potentially show how economic disruptions might disproportionately affect industry sectors with greater concentrations of small businesses or diverse racial/ethnic ownership patterns. Analyzing the characteristics of business ownership and size can offer a useful baseline for assessing inclusion and equity.

Economic base data, cluster analysis, supply chain information, business development information, and other locally derived data each provide a different part of the big picture. The resiliency perspective examines how a community can better leverage its locational advantages or safeguard against economic downturns or impacts on individual businesses or industry sectors. Having a broad understanding of the economic base provides context for a recovery process as well and points to where the impacts from economic events can have indirect effects in other areas of the economy. Understanding how the different parts of the economic base work together also helps to identify areas of strength in the economy that can assist in the recovery process.



Assessing Geographic Assets and Vulnerabilities

A community's geographic assets can present both benefits and vulnerabilities for increasing economic resiliency and improving community recovery from economic disruptions. Each community's unique characteristics should be factored into disaster planning because they play an important role in the community's ability to recover from disaster-related economic losses. Benefits may include a community's unique features that contribute to its economy and attract tourism, such as recreation areas, agricultural products, historic sites, and special events. Vulnerabilities may include the community's ability to access services and resources, its ability to coordinate with other neighboring jurisdictions and stakeholders, and the climate-driven impacts unique to the community.



Source: Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



Engaging Businesses Before, During, and After Disruption

While an economic development strategy, planning, and outreach are the foundations of economic resilience and recovery, the work of implementation requires directly engaging with businesses. Mid- to large-sized businesses typically have more resources and can pivot faster and more easily when faced with an economic disruption; therefore, economic developers and state and local governments focus on assisting the more vulnerable small businesses.



Grassroots communications can provide an effective method for quickly establishing a wide information network. The key to success is mobilizing businesses to share important news and information on available resources through their peer networks.

The size and diversity of California's small business base are impressive assets, particularly in the sector's role as a major employer in the state; however, the base's complexity and scope pose unique challenges when building competency and interest in disaster preparedness. California is home to

multiple technical assistance programs, funded by public and private entities, that help small businesses prepare business continuity and disaster readiness plans. Many no-cost tools are available to assist businesses in boosting their preparedness acumen.

In addition, by capturing key small business data prior to a disruption, government officials can quickly work to offer or provide access to resources that are relevant to local businesses' needs, such as short-term business loans, counseling to revise business plans, access to employer relief programs, and other services. The faster that business owners are connected with value-added services, the more quickly they can advance to recovery and the more likely they are to help promote those same services to other impacted businesses.

Conclusion

Economic developers are at the center of economic recovery and resiliency. As the boots-on-the-ground professionals charged with assisting businesses, they can inform policy makers and local leaders on what is needed to create an environment where employers can thrive. Economic development helps increase revenue to a jurisdiction, so it can provide the services, amenities, and quality of life that residents desire. The Playbook uses these concepts to provide tools, tactics, case studies, and resources for communities responding to or preparing for an economic disruption.

In addition, the Playbook shares how to recognize and embrace your community's diversity in the ongoing implementation of economic development. Your residents, workforce, and businesses make your community unique. This uniqueness, along with values and culture, will help define what your community needs in recovery and in ongoing resilience planning.

Although we cannot always predict or avoid economic disruptions, being strategic and planning for resiliency will better prepare your community to meet future challenges caused by economic disruptions and will position it for a faster recovery.