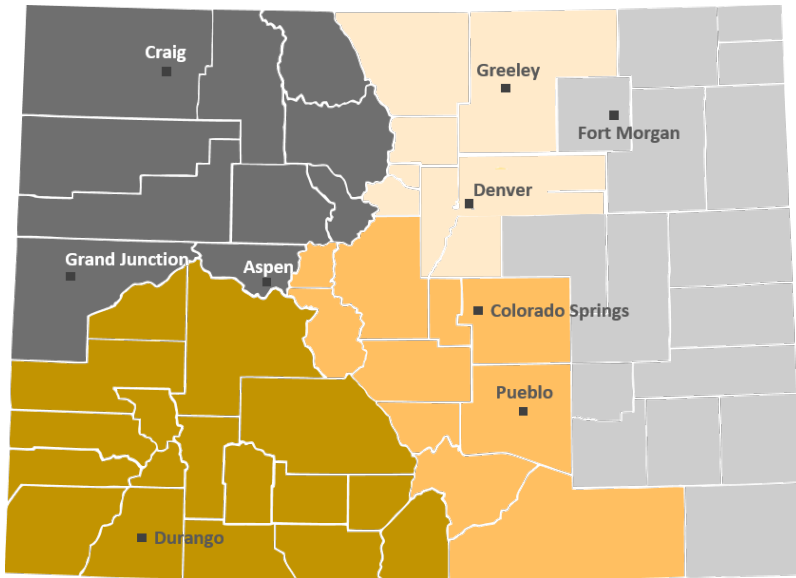# Resilience Planning in Colorado's Local Governments:
A Baseline Planning Survey Report

Resilient communities are able to adapt and thrive no matter what disruptions they face. In partnership with Colorado communities, this 2019 survey was designed to help the Colorado Resiliency Office (CRO) build a Resilience and Community Recovery Program to support communities in addressing their vulnerabilities and risks.

Regional Breakdown for Survey Analysis

Based on survey findings, **the Colorado Resiliency Office can serve Colorado's local governments through a number of programming, educational, and communications modes**. Understanding the needs and concerns of local governments will assist the CRO's efforts. The following key findings and recommendations summarize the full report.
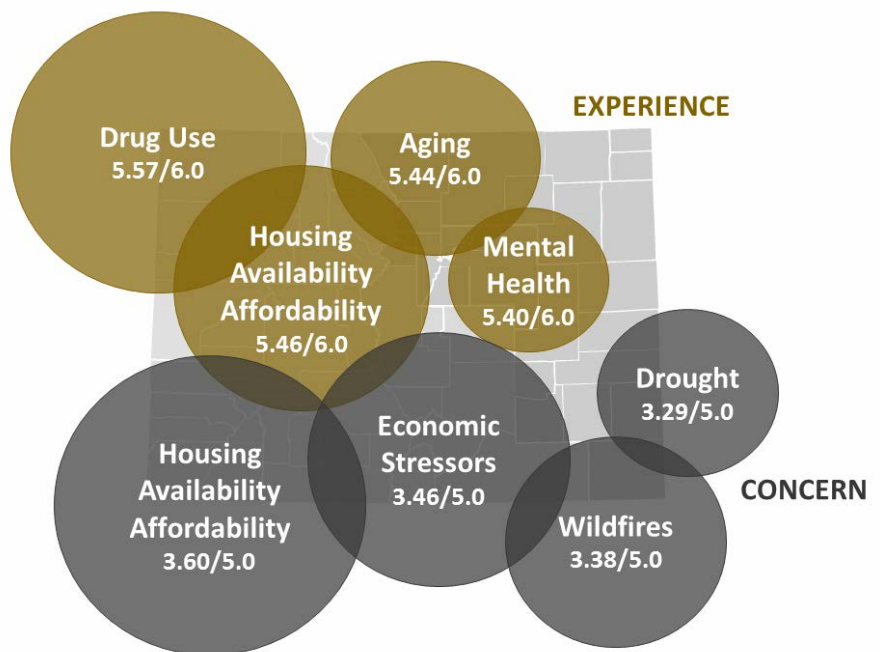
PLANNING IN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Local governments across Colorado vary according to capacity, planning progress, and priority they place on planning for resilience. **Higher capacity organizations are more likely to place higher priority on various aspects of planning for resilience.**

While varying levels of resilience-related planning efforts exist across Colorado, it is important to point out that several types of plans are rare in all regions of Colorado:

- Resilience Plans
- Disaster Recovery Plans
- Climate Plans
- Drought Plans

EXPERIENCE WITH SHOCKS & STRESSORS

Colorado communities have faced a great variety of shocks and stressors historically. Some have recently dealt with catastrophic wildfires and floods, while others routinely cope with stressors such as drought, economic strain, housing affordability, and public or mental health issues that cause chronic concern for local governments.

EXPERIENCE

Drug Use 5.57/6.0

Aging 5.44/6.0

Housing Availability Affordability 5.46/6.0

Mental Health 5.40/6.0

Drought 3.29/5.0

Housing Availability Affordability 3.60/5.0

Economic Stressors 3.46/5.0

CONCERN

Wildfires 3.38/5.0

Statewide Shock and Stress Experience vs. Concerns

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When individuals have experienced a shock or stress they are more likely to be concerned about that type of risk. Concern for risks is connected to higher priority being placed on resilience planning, but is not associated with planning actions by local governments. The figure to the above shows experience (on a 6-point scale) with various shocks and stressors compared with concern for a variety of stressors (on a 5-point scale).

DEFINING RESILIENCE

While the CRO views resilience broadly, including natural hazards, human-caused risks and vulnerabilities, economic stressors, health-related stressors, and others, survey respondents were more likely to view natural resources and infrastructure as related to resilience than some social stressors such as education access, aging, or drug use/mental health issues.

Knowing how individuals understand resilience can assist the CRO in communicating clearly and determining opportunities for educational outreach. The figure above illustrates the five community areas considered aspects of resilience by survey respondents and the Colorado regions that demonstrated the highest level of agreement when asked if each area is part of resilience.

RESILIENCE IS…

Public Health
Highest: All regions agree overall

Land Use Planning
Highest: Eastern Plains
North-Central
South-Central

Infrastructure
Highest: North-Central
South-Central

Economic Development
Highest: North-Central
Southwest

Climate & Environment
Highest: South-Central
Southwest

CRO ROLE & PROGRAMMING

Survey respondents indicated that several CRO programming categories would be most useful for supporting their work. Preferences for CRO programming include providing best practices for building resilience, training local government staff, providing a database of resilience information, and directing local governments to funding information related to resiliency planning.

#1 Best Practices

#2 Training

#3 Database

#4 Funding Info

Most Helpful CRO Programming & Regional Differences

Respondents across the state agreed that a website that includes the various resources, databases, and planning tools is the most essential communication tool that the CRO can use. Community workshops (within their community or nearby) and webinars were also ranked highly.

It is not surprising that the regions farthest from the Denver area are the most interested in training and workshops that can be accessed remotely. Providing websites and archived webinars as well as in- person workshops will be critical to assisting them in resilience planning, particularly in regions that also have lower capacity.

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