

RESILIENCY  
PLAN



# INTRODUCTION

In 2021, The Town of Bennett adopted a new Comprehensive Plan. A major action from the comprehensive plan was creating a Resiliency Plan. A Resiliency Plan identifies our community's potential hazards and threats, and then establishes adaptation, mitigation and recovery goals. These goals help reduce likely impacts and ensure that key infrastructure systems continue operating, or quickly begin providing services again.

## Resiliency



Natural, technological and human-caused hazards take a high toll on communities, but better managing disaster risks can reduce the costs of lives, livelihoods and quality of life. The Town recognizes that planning and implementing prioritized measures can strengthen resiliency, improve a community's ability to continue or restore vital services in a more timely way and build back better after damaging events. One of the primary objectives of this Plan update is to prepare the Town for future events, minimize risk and assure recovery if disasters occur.

The plan provides a practical and flexible approach to help Bennett improve resilience by setting priorities and allocating resources to manage risks for prevailing hazards. Early identification of the planning process, which includes working examples, will help to illustrate the elements of resiliency. Furthermore, the Town will gather resources to characterize the social and economic dimensions of the community, dependencies and cascading consequences, and building and infrastructure performance. Finally, the implementation of resiliency guides can assist integration of consistent resiliency goals into economic development, zoning, mitigation and planning activities that impact buildings, utilities and other infrastructure system needs.

**Achievable Goal:** Create the next-step process to help the Town think through and plan for its social and economic needs, their particular hazard risks and recovery of the built environment.

**Key Strategy:** Setting performance goals for vital social functions—healthcare, education and public safety—and supporting buildings and infrastructure systems - transportation, energy, communications, and water and wastewater.

**Catalyst Action:** Create the action-oriented resiliency companion report to help the Town follow a guided and researched process, including providing a series of customizable templates and additional resources if a hazard occurs.

**Policy Directive:** The community's social and economic needs and functions should drive goal-setting for how the built environment performs and providing a comprehensive method to align community priorities and resources with resilience goals

This document lays out the initial framework, the current systems in place and mitigations strategies, divided by timeframe, for each of the following category of disaster or disruptions.

- Natural
- Utilities & Tech
- Economic
- Human Caused

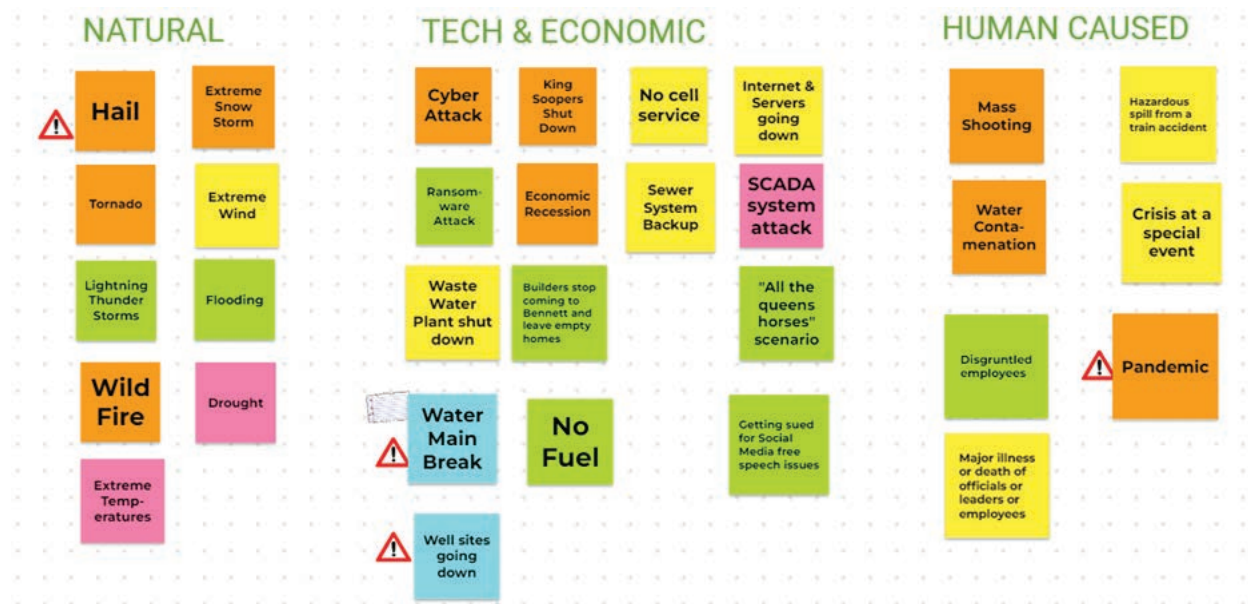
A key step to mitigate disaster losses and lessen disruptions is developing a comprehensive understanding of the community's hazards, vulnerabilities, and risks. Therefore, a Task Force including the Town's department leaders and Town Safety Officer was convened. The first meeting was to brainstorm and identify possible hazards, risks and disasters. The next meeting focused on creating a risk matrix to understand the probability and scope of the disruption.

The Town of Bennett cannot achieve resiliency by implementing a single project or reaching set milestones. Resiliency is something that requires continuous work and adapting processes, plans, and projects as the context changes.

With that understanding, the top three ingredients for resiliency have been established for the categories of potential hazards and disruptions that were identified as most likely and/or most impactful by the Resiliency Task Force and the Town Board of Trustees. From there, possible actions and solutions –mitigation strategies – for a quick and strong recovery were generated.

### Identified Risks for the Town of Bennett

(After the initial meetings, Utilities and Tech became their own category as they had similarities around technology and connectivity, that were distinct from the causes and responses for Economic disasters.)



For each category of risk or disruption, the report contains the following sections.

- Framework
- Current Systems
- Mitigation Strategies

### Framework

Resiliency ingredients comprise a strong initial response to the emergency that includes protocols and pre-planned communication strategies and solid partnerships with community non-profits, governments and businesses. An established framework prior to any disaster or disruption can minimize the severity and overall impacts. Each category of risk or disruption will identify or create a framework or outline for responding to disasters and disruptions. The framework will include:

#### a. Effective and Efficient Emergency Response

Protocols and Incident Management Plans will be referenced that allow emergencies to be handled and contained as quickly as possible.

This plan is a companion to Town emergency operation plans. It does not replace, but enhances by adding considerations of mitigation and recovery as early as possible.

**b. Communication**

Opportunities for the Town to be recognized as a clear, continual, and reliable source of information before, during and after a crisis will be identified.

**c. Partnerships**

Trained community resources that activate when called upon will be discovered and cultivated through ongoing networking and interactions prior to disasters to increase cooperation during and after emergencies.

Partnerships can be a powerful tool for positive change, as well as building capacity. We can pool resources, expertise, and ideas to address the unique challenges faced by rural areas.

**Current Systems**

Task Force and other staff meetings revealed current systems and the rationale behind them. Reviews of the systems to handle emergencies and recovery that are already in place were performed. The Hazard Mitigation Plans of Adams and Arapahoe County, that include sections for the Town of Bennett, were also studied.

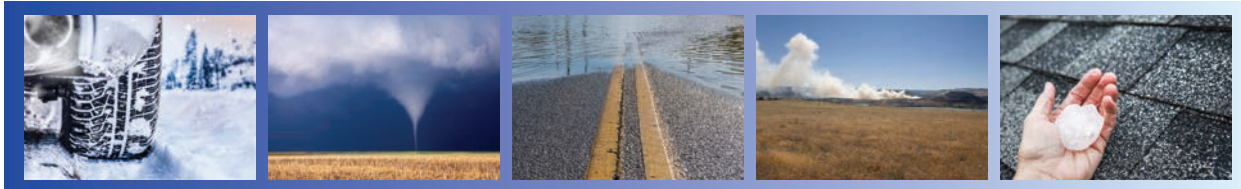
As gaps or opportunities in the current systems are identified, mitigation strategies can be developed to cover them. New mitigating policies can build on lessons learned from previous disasters and disruptions for prevention and more effective responses and recovery.

**Mitigation Strategies**

Identifying mitigation strategies is the final part of the Resiliency Plan. This was augmented by research into lessons learned from other local governments and attending trainings from the Colorado Resiliency Office and ICMA. Budget and staff bandwidth were taken into consideration as Mitigation Strategies were prioritized into short, mid and long term action steps. Ongoing efforts will be required to evaluate the strategies and asses their feasibility, return on investment and the Town’s capacity to implement them.

A section for each of the four categories follows, containing the framework, review of current systems and identified mitigation strategies.

# NATURAL HAZARDS AND DISRUPTIONS



## Weather

### Snow, Wind, Drought, Hail, Wildfire, Tornado, Flooding and Extreme Temperatures

Resiliency planning for natural hazards and disruptions started by identifying the most common and most likely weather events that strike communities on the eastern plains and the Town of Bennett. Quick storms or weather events would not typically require more than the standard response, such as the Snow Plow Procedures. However, weather events that can become dangerous and life-threatening will almost certainly require mitigation and recovery plans.

Extreme heat is the single largest cause of weather-related deaths in the U.S.<sup>1</sup> so, while not as dramatic, emergency and recovery responses may be just as necessary as the more recognizable natural hazards.

Because not every natural hazard or weather event would require a resiliency response, a framework indicates when recovery plans may be necessary after the emergency has passed. The framework will include established emergency responses, communication protocols, and partnership information.

#### 1. Framework

Recovery plans from weather events would be necessary if the damage is:

- Widespread
- To critical infrastructure
- Effects vulnerable populations
- Impacts last longer than 1 week

##### a. Emergency Response

###### *Snow*

The Town's procedures for plowing have been adapted from the nationwide Levels of Service model based on current equipment and staffing realities. All Public Works staff are trained on snow removal. During a storm there is constant communication about conditions and forecasts. The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) will indicate when roads and interstates are to be closed and the Adams County Office of Emergency Management will activate the opening and use of any designated shelters.

###### *Extreme Temperatures*

During extreme temperatures, individuals would call 911 for personal emergencies. Outdoor work for Town personnel may be limited and proper protective clothing would be required. Community members and visitors would be encouraged to use these same precautions.

### *Wind and Tornado, Damaging Hail*

Emergency alerts from the National Weather Service, the County Offices of Emergency Management and the Town of Bennett’s CodeRED would be activated. Individuals would call 911 for personal emergencies.

### *Wildfire*

Emergency alerts from the National Weather Service, the County Offices of Emergency Management and the Town of Bennett’s CodeRED would be activated. Individuals would call 911 for personal emergencies. The Bennett-Watkins Fire District would follow their protocols to protect life and property. The District would also coordinate calling in back up from the County and other Fire Departments.

#### **b. Communication**

To support emergency preparedness and resiliency planning a clear communication system for residents to receive warnings, reach out for assistance and be made aware of resources must be available and widely used.

CodeRED is the most efficient way to reach everyone quickly (if cell service hasn’t been affected). Ensuring a high participation rate in this service is vital.

As the emergency passes, reliable and consistent communication becomes essential to resiliency. Establishing Town Hall and Bennett communication channels as the number one source of factual updates and information will build community trust for the next situation.

	CODERED	WEB UPDATES	SOCIAL MEDIA	PRINT MATERIALS	OTHER
SNOW	✓	✓	✓		
EXTREME TEMPERATURES		✓	✓	✓	
WIND, HAIL, TORNADO	✓	✓	✓		
WILDFIRE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
FLOODING	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DROUGHT		✓	✓	✓	

#### **c. Partnerships**

The following partnerships will be activated or called on for collaboration during natural hazard responses and/or during recovery efforts.

The Bennett Recreation District’s Recreation Center is designated as an emergency shelter and is activated by the Adams County Office of Emergency Management.

The Town has Mutual Aid Agreements with Counties and neighboring cities and towns for responses to natural hazard disasters.

CORE has wildfire mitigation programs and resources that can be shared with the community.

## 2. Current Systems

The following systems and operating procedures pertaining to natural hazards and disruptions are in place.

The natural hazard phenomena identified in the resiliency plan are very common on the plains and in Bennett. There are multiple warning systems for Bennett residents, businesses and visitors to minimize impacts from weather catastrophes, including sirens, CodeRED and the National Weather Service Emergency Alert System.

Redundancy is the best method of preparedness for all hazards a community may face. The Town has tornado sirens and to support redundancy, there have been continual communication campaigns to encourage CodeRED utilization and giveaways of weather radios. Approximately 50% of the Bennett population is signed up with CodeRED.

After the Marshall Fire, it has become clear that the wildfire property risk of Colorado's suburban plains is growing.<sup>2</sup> A coordinated emergency response was practiced during a neighborhood evacuation exercise in July 2023 planned by Arapahoe County as a way to learn and grow in responding to a wildland fire. Warning systems and evacuation routes are pre planned.

Finally, FEMA has awarded the Town of Bennett a grant for an emergency generator at NomCom to maintain service and power in an emergency. This backup generator will be installed in 2024 and provide additional building resiliency.

The Public Works Department has an on call system and communication plans during snow and other natural hazard events.

The Town does not currently have any designated warming or cooling centers.

## 3. Mitigation Strategies

The following short, mid and long term strategies will be reviewed, modified if needed and executed.

### *Short Term (1-2 Years and/or Annually)*

- Public Works to regularly review snow routes and plowing protocols to ensure they are adequate.
- Public Works to evaluate proper staffing levels and equipment maintenance schedules for snow plowing.
- Public Works to establish a care and maintenance schedule for Town trees near power lines.
- Public Works and Communications to promote care and maintenance of trees on private and business properties.

- Public Works to identify if there are adequate protocols and protections in place for outdoor workers in extreme heat or cold<sup>3</sup>. For example, training to assess temperature illnesses, adhering to necessary break schedules to recover from extreme temperatures, weather protection/personal safety gear.
- Communications to review Town demographics to identify vulnerable populations (age, economic, language, etc) and assess ability to receive emergency alerts and information.
- Town Manager's Office to review the Snow Buddies program in Arvada and Arapahoe County to determine the need and interest for a similar program in Bennett.
- Communication campaigns to increase CodeRED utilization to 75% of Bennett citizens.
- Town Manager's Office to survey the community for individual preparedness: Do residents, visitors and businesses know where to go for safety? Have vulnerable populations investigated their unique needs?
- Communication campaign to encourage residents to maintain access to contact information for Town Hall. Distribute magnets and pens with the phone number and web address, and suggest that Town Hall be added as a contact in phones.
- Town Safety Officer and Safety Committee to create an Action Plan based on the debrief from the July 2023 Antelope Hills evacuation exercise.
- Town Safety Officer and Safety Committee to review the Adams County Office of Emergency Management report from the 2023 Bennett Tornado tabletop exercise and recommend any appropriate mitigation strategies.

#### ***Mid Term (2-5 Years)***

- Town Safety Officer to assess the Town's weather monitoring systems for reliability and adequacy.
- Communications Department to begin regular Spanish translation of all emergency alerts and announcements.
- Planning Department to review building and construction codes for strength to withstand expected hazards. Create and revise, if necessary.
- Town Safety Officer and Safety Committee review evacuation plans and routes, ensuring that all parts of Town have these plans and that vulnerable populations and appropriate accommodations have been identified.
- Every 2-5 years, put forward a communications campaign to communicate evacuation plans and routes.
- Town Safety Officer and willing county office(s) of Emergency Management host a neighborhood evacuation exercise to gain readiness and resiliency feedback and data.

#### ***Long Term (5+ Years)***

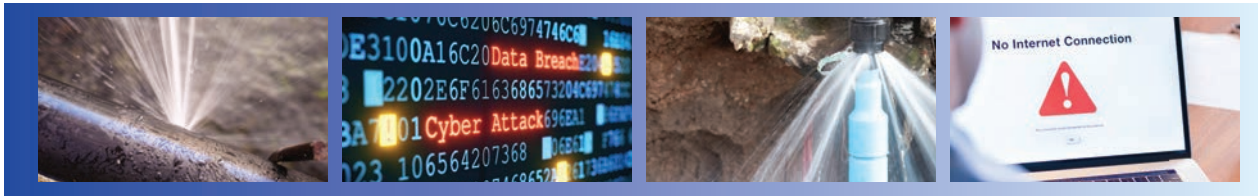
- Town Managers Office to study the necessity and feasibility of tornado shelters.
- Town Managers Office to study the necessity and feasibility of cooling and warming centers.
- If shelters and centers came online, a study of back up energy and power sources would be a necessity by the Town Safety Officer.
- Also, once shelters and centers came online, a list of each shelter's amenities and assets should be created and maintained by Communications in a space for the public to access (ie, website).



## Resources

1. National Weather Service, Weather Related Fatality and Injury Statistics.  
<https://www.weather.gov/hazstat/>
2. 1 million Colorado buildings are threatened by wildfire. The risk is highest in suburban counties.  
<https://coloradosun.com/2022/05/19/wildfire-risk-colorado-first-street-foundation/>.
3. Fla. county eyes heat protection for workers. [The Washington Post](#)  
Flood damage and prevention -  
[https://library.municode.com/co/bennett/codes/municipal\\_code?nodeId=CH16LAUS\\_DE\\_ARTVIIFLDAPRRE](https://library.municode.com/co/bennett/codes/municipal_code?nodeId=CH16LAUS_DE_ARTVIIFLDAPRRE)  
Climatic and Geographic Design Criteria -  
<https://codes.iccsafe.org/s/IRC2018/chapter-3-building-planning/IRC2018-Pt03-Ch03-SecR301.2>

# UTILITIES AND TECHNICAL DISASTERS AND DISRUPTIONS



## Utilities Disruptions

Sewer System, Well Sites and Wastewater Treatment Facility

## Tech Disruptions

SCADA System, Cyber Attack and Internet Failure

Online systems have become a fundamental aspect of modern life, transforming the way local government operations function. Minor disruptions to the power grid or internet connections are also a fact of modern life. When these disruptions are widespread or for an extended length of time, they can have disastrous consequences and a domino effect on service levels and quality of life.

Operations in every department of the Town of Bennett are reliant on internet connections. The Utilities Department is reliant on constant electrical power to maintain appropriate and safe water and wastewater treatment and delivery. Disruptions or deliberate attacks to internet services and connectivity can also have immediate and lasting effects on the ability to maintain professional services for the community.

A framework indicates when recovery plans may be necessary after the emergency has passed. The framework will include established emergency responses, communication protocols, and partnership information.

## Utilities

If the power supply to the systems maintained by the Utilities Department is interrupted, there are backups and emergency protocols in place. Immediate action is required if drinking water is contaminated and recovery systems may be called upon based on the following framework.

### 1. Framework

Recovery plans for utility disruptions would be necessary if the damage:

- Is extreme
- Impacts are widespread (beyond regional)
- Lasts longer than 1 week and/or effects critical functions

#### a. Emergency Response

The Utilities Department has experienced disruptions to the sewer system, well sites, and power loss to the waste water treatment facility. They have developed Standard Operating Procedures and generally these do not require extensive recovery plans.

The waste water treatment facility has a back up generator that can run continuously with diesel fuel. Extreme natural disasters such as flooding or wildfire that affect the entire Town or region could require recovery actions (see the weather section.)

**b. Communication**

Resiliency Planning would involve communication about the measures underway and if further action is needed by the public.

Any water contamination because of the disaster or disruption could create the need to supply drinking water to residents. It would be urgent to communicate to residents and businesses that the water is potentially or known to be unsafe. They would need to know where to get supplies and/or reimbursement and when the danger has passed.

	CODERED	WEB UPDATES	SOCIAL MEDIA	PRINT MATERIALS	OTHER
SEWER SYSTEM DISRUPTION	✓	✓	✓		
WELL SITE DISRUPTION		✓	✓	✓	
WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY		✓			

**c. Partnerships**

If a water main break or sewer line back up causes damage to homes or buildings, the Town would begin reaching out to restoration companies and scheduling repairs. Temporary shelter may be needed. Insurance claims would be filed, and assistance could be provided for homeowners to file their claims, as well.

**2. Current Systems**

The following systems and operating procedures pertaining to utility disasters and disruptions are in place.

Standard Operating Procedures created by the Utilities Department guide staff through the necessary emergency responses. The Town has insurance coverage for utility system failures or disruptions.

Emergency Communications through CodeRed, social media and the website can be performed offsite.

**3. Mitigation Strategies**

The following short, mid and long term strategies will be reviewed, modified if needed and executed.

**Short Term (1-2 Years and/or Annually)**

- Sample communication templates for utilities disruptions should be maintained by the Communications Department along with the trigger points for distribution.
- Establish a regular training schedule for Utilities Department employees on emergency procedures. Involve those outside the Department as appropriate.
- Ensure that the Standard Operating Procedures are reviewed annually by the Utilities Department for weaknesses and that lessons learned from emergency and non-emergency events the previous year are incorporated.
- The Utilities Department should regularly assess that the physical (fences, barriers, locks, etc) and technical (passwords, online security) protective systems are adequate.

### Mid Term (2-5 Years)

- The Utilities Department and Town Safety Officer should annually review the insurance coverage to assess if it is appropriate to the risks and the costs associated with the potential for actual failures and disruptions.
- In 2023, a Hazard Mitigation Grant application for a backup generator system has been submitted by the Town Safety Officer. With expansions or additional systems, the Utilities department should review that the capability of the backup power remains acceptable.

### Long Term (5+ Years)

- The Utilities Department, with the Town Managers Office, should investigate the possibilities of microgrids or renewable energy sources to supply power to the water and waste water systems in case of power failures.

## Internet Disruptions or Cyber Attack

Internet disasters and disruptions can be accidental or done with malicious intent. The emergency response would require an additional decision matrix if the disruption was a cyber-attack that came with demands to resume functions or reclaim data. After the emergency, the recovery process could be similar and dependent on the resiliency of the systems.

### 1. Framework

Recovery plans for internet disruptions would be necessary if the damage:

- Is extreme
- Lasts longer than 1 week and/or effects critical functions
- Is a credible cyber-attack or threat

#### a. Emergency Response

If the SCADA system experienced a cyber attack or was unable to function, the back up is manual control. Recovery would require intervention by the Controls Engineer and the IT Department. Definition: SCADA - Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition

The IT Department would reach out to professional associations for guidance and direction, such as CISA - Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, CIAC - Colorado Information Analysis, CIS - Center for Internet Security and the Department of Homeland Security.

#### b. Communication

Resiliency Planning could involve communication about the measures underway and if further action is needed by the public. Sensitivity to criminal investigations if the systems are down because of an attack would inform the level of communication with the community. A failure of the SCADA system that affected water quality would need immediate action.

	CODERED	WEB UPDATES	SOCIAL MEDIA	PRINT MATERIALS	OTHER
SCADA SYSTEM	✓	✓			
CYBER ATTACK		✓			
INTERNET FAILURE				✓	✓

**c. Partnerships**

The IT Department has memberships in Multi State Information Sharing and Analysis Center (MS-ISAC), they offer webinars, trainings and other resources for protection and emergency responses.

The Town’s network is maintained by Colorado Statewide Internet Portal Authority (COSIPA) and the Town has a Networking and Systems consultant with Behind the Curtain (BTC) who assists with network infrastructure.

**2. Current Systems**

The following systems and operating procedures pertaining to utilities and technical disasters and disruptions are in place.

Standard Operating Procedures created by the Utilities Department guide staff through the necessary emergency responses. The Town has insurance coverage for utility system failures or disruptions. The IT Department has offsite network backups.

Emergency Communications through CodeRed, social media and the website can be performed offsite.

The weakest link in any cyber security system is the individual internet user. To raise awareness of security risks and create the habits to minimize them, the IT department has secured a grant for KnowBe4 cyber security training for Town staff.

**3. Mitigation Strategies**

The following short, mid and long term strategies will be reviewed, modified if needed and executed.

**Short Term (1-2 Years and/or Annually)**

- Sample communication templates for utilities disruptions should be maintained by the Communications Department along with the trigger points for distribution.
- Develop alternate systems for communication during extended internet interruption.
  - Create MOUs or informal partnerships with Counties and neighboring jurisdictions to post emergency information on their websites.
  - Post emergency information (or QR code) on sandwich boards at key locations in Town (City Hall, King Soopers, Convenience Stores and message boards).
- Establish a regular training schedule for Utilities Department employees on emergency procedures. Involve those outside the Department as appropriate.

### *Short Term (1-2 Years and/or Annually) Cont.*

- Staff KnowBe4 trainings: IT Department to ensure they are attended and understood, as well as follow thru on items brought to light from these trainings.
- Ensure that the Standard Operating Procedures are reviewed annually by the Utilities Department for weaknesses and that lessons learned from emergency and non-emergency events the previous year are incorporated.
- The Utilities Department should regularly assess that the physical (fences, barriers, locks, etc) and technical (passwords, online security) protective systems are adequate.

### *Mid Term (2-5 Years)*

- The Utilities Department and Town Safety Officer should annually review the insurance coverage to assess if it is appropriate to the risks and the costs associated with the potential for actual failures and disruptions, particularly in regards to the SCADA system.
- IT Department can identify top 3 internet needs for each departments' continuity and investigate the need to create an Internet Outage Continuity Plan. (See Village of Lynbrook, NY as a model plan that maps out every function conducted by local government, identifies those involving Internet and lists alternative, offline methods of getting the job done.)

## **Resources**

Internet Outage Continuity Plan of Village of Lynbrook, NY

# HUMAN CAUSED DISASTERS AND DISRUPTIONS



## Transportation Disruptions

No Fuel, Train Derailment, Hazardous Spills and Highway Closure

## Other Crisis Disruptions

Major Retail Business Shut Down, Shootings, Emergency at Town Event or Meeting, Illness or Death of Employee or Official and Pandemic

Resiliency planning for human caused disasters and disruptions started by identifying the most common and potentially most catastrophic events that could strike communities on the eastern plains and the Town of Bennett. Many of the crises in this category will require the cooperation and possibly even delegation of recovery management to larger regional or national organizations. Understanding these hierarchies and where the Town of Bennett can augment local services will foster community resilience.

Other critical incidents can unsettle and shock a community. Mass violence has effects that will need widespread and continued intervention long after the emergency has passed. Recovering a sense of safety and normalcy will take concerted effort.

Other incidents that may not rise to the level of life threatening, can still cause disruptions that will require recovery efforts. The closure of the one and only sizeable grocery store in the Town would be only an inconvenience for some but would disproportionately affect vulnerable populations and those without reliable transportation. It would also create a considerable economic impact for the Town.

## Transportation

If there is a hazardous spill from a train derailment or truck accident, quick and controlled evacuations can mitigate impacts to health and safety. The aftermath of these incidents could require long term environmental clean-up and displacement of residents and businesses.

If highway access is closed for a significant amount of time from weather disruptions or a train derailment, this will lead to supply chain disruptions in all sectors and possible fuel shortages.

A framework indicates when recovery plans may be necessary after the emergency has passed. The framework will include established emergency responses, communication protocols, and partnership information.

### 1. Framework

Recovery plans from transportation disruptions would be necessary if:

- The lack of fuel was a regional issue (available gas is more than 30 miles away)
- Supply runs low for backup generators
- The air is toxic

- Water or soil is compromised
- Effects vulnerable populations
- Impacts last longer than one week

**a. Emergency Response**

Traffic Incident Management system (TIMS) will be applied and Bennett/Watkins Fire Protection District will be notified and they will assume command of hazardous spill incidents. Emergency response protocols exist from County, State, Federal and Health Departments to manage hazardous spills from trucks or trains.

Response agencies will conduct incident planning activities for the respective incident. Union Pacific will identify key players/communication methods and Emergency Responders and local officials.

Colorado Department of Transportation, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, FEMA, the EPA and County agencies will be involved in the emergency response and the long term recovery from hazardous situations.

Highway closures and fuel issues would most likely require more local actions.

**b. Communication**

Communication to Town of Bennett residents and businesses must match information from other agencies. The community can be kept informed with links to source updates to maintain consistency.

Residents will also be seeking a reliable source to be made aware of what resources are available and where and how to reach them.

Regular updates on the change or lack of, will be vital to maintain trust and combat uncertainty.

	CODERED	WEB UPDATES	SOCIAL MEDIA	PRINT MATERIALS	OTHER
NO FUEL		✓	✓		
TRAIN DERAILMENT		✓	✓	✓	
HAZARDOUS SPILLS	✓	✓	✓	✓	
HIGHWAY CLOSURE	✓	✓	✓		



### c. Partnerships

Temporary shelter may be needed for residents displaced by damage from a train derailment or hazardous spill.

Community agencies and local nonprofits are resources for shelter and food as part of recovery efforts.

## 2. Current Systems

The following systems and operating procedures pertaining to human caused hazards and disruptions to the transportation system are in place.

A cooperative network between Town leadership and the Town Safety Officer with leadership and the Emergency Management Offices of Adams and Arapahoe County, as well as regular meetings are utilized to maintain preparation and planning for disruptions and disasters of transportation system hazards.

In the event of a small hazardous substance spilling from a train or truck, the Town would connect with Emergency Management Offices of Adams and Arapahoe County. In the event of a larger spill, these offices would connect with State and Federal authorities. The management and clean-up of these hazards are beyond the scope of local government. The Town's role would be to liaison with these agencies and communicate regularly with the community.

## 3. Mitigation Strategies

The following short, mid and long term strategies will be reviewed, modified if needed and executed.

### *Short Term (1-2 Years and/or Annually)*

- To better understand the risks, an investigation and understanding of how many trucks and trains come through the Town with hazardous materials should be conducted by Administration.
- Local mitigation actions should also be investigated by the Town Safety Officer and Administration. Can the Town influence speed limit enforcement, safety inspections, route changes, etc.?

### *Mid Term (2-5 Years)*

- Offer an educational campaign for personal preparedness to contribute to a smoother recovery.  
<https://www.npr.org/2023/02/18/1157645660/what-to-do-during-hazardous-chemical-spills>
- Survey each departments' need for a continuous supply of fuel to discover how much of a back supply is needed and feasible to maintain. Create a fuel outage continuity plan where necessary for any departments or particular operations.

### *Long Term (5+ Years)*

- Conduct or take part in a hazardous spill training exercise with all agencies that would be willing to participate.

## Shootings and other Human Crisis Disruptions

The commonality of this category of disruptions and hazards is that they are human caused and/or deeply personal. Mass shootings or other traumatic incidents will have multiple layers and levels of impact on the community. A debilitating illness or sudden death of an employee or elected official will also require a plan for healing.

A framework indicates when recovery plans may be necessary after the emergency has passed. The framework will include established emergency responses, communication protocols, and partnership information.

### 1. Framework

Recovery plans from a human tragedy would be necessary if:

- It is a community level or staff trauma
- Effects continuity of operations
- Effects vulnerable populations

#### a. Emergency Response

Call 911 for immediate local responses to end violent or life threatening situations and manage the event. Coordination between the local first responders must be ongoing.

Individuals at the scene would initially take cover. They may also help others to safety and providing life-saving care as appropriate.

#### b. Communication

The Town needs to be trusted as a source for facts about these traumatic events (even if they are not the first to report or share the information) to avoid misinformation and panic. Sharing information about recovery resources and participating at the community level will encourage confidence.

	CODERED	WEB UPDATES	SOCIAL MEDIA	PRINT MATERIALS	OTHER
SHOOTINGS	✓	✓	✓		
ER & TRAUMATIC EVENTS		✓	✓	✓	
ILLNESS OR DEATH OF EMPLOYEE OR OFFICIAL		✓	✓	✓	

#### c. Partnerships

Grief Counseling and mental health services from local and regional providers will be necessary after personal or community level traumas.

Temporary shelters and gathering spaces may be needed in the short term and for larger memorial events.

Town staff can rely on their professional membership organizations to provide support and guidance after emergencies its members have experienced before.

## 2. Current Systems

The following systems and operating procedures pertaining to human caused disasters and disruptions are in place.

The Town has an EAP (Employee Assistance Program) that can be utilized for any reason by all employees. They can also be called on for critical incident response.

The largest event hosted by the Town, Bennett Days, has incident management protocols that are reviewed and communicated every year.

Regular lifesaving trainings, such as CPR and stop the bleed are attended Town staff.

The Administrative Services Department maintains up to date personnel records with emergency contacts.

The Town maintains positive relationships with community organizations and leaders to foster collaboration during times of crisis and emergencies.

## 3. Mitigation Strategies

The following short, mid and long term strategies will be reviewed, modified if needed and executed.

### *Short Term (1-2 Years and/or Annually)*

- Host or promote attendance at trainings to recognize the signs of potential threats and the importance of reporting suspicious activities.
- Create a floor plan for using the Bennett Recreation Center as a shelter after a crisis event that offers locations for reunification, privacy, regular updates from law enforcement and coordination of water, food and other donations.
- Create a media plan for dealing with excessive focus that traumatic events will bring to the Town.

### *Mid Term (2-5 Years)*

- Review the Town's emergency plans surrounding traumatic events and revise based on lessons learned from any previous events.

### *Long Term (5+ Years)*

- Conduct or participate in a joint training exercise to improve coordination and communication during crisis situations.

## **Pandemic**

A public health crisis, such as a pandemic is quite familiar. The risk for another is higher than ever before as international travel, changes in weather and global networks enable diseases to spread faster than before.

In a pandemic, a virus is spread quickly and affects a large number of people. Individual actions are consequential for the whole community. The level of trust between the public and government leadership at all levels will directly impact individual and collective behavior.

A framework indicates when recovery plans may be necessary after the emergency has passed. The framework will include established emergency responses, communication protocols, and partnership information.

**1. Framework**

Recovery plans from a pandemic would be necessary if:

- Effects vulnerable populations
- A public emergency is declared

**a. Emergency Response**

Call 911 for immediate local responses to personal health crisis situations.

Elected leaders and staff institute public health measures quickly and efficiently.

**b. Communication**

Regular updates about the status of the health alerts and risk levels.

Town would establish a means for residents to reach out for assistance and be made aware of what resources the Town has available.

	CODERED	WEB UPDATES	SOCIAL MEDIA	PRINT MATERIALS	OTHER
PANDEMIC		✓	✓	✓	

**c. Partnerships**

Adams County and Arapahoe County Public Health Departments serve the residents and businesses of the Town.

**2. Current Systems**

The following systems and operating procedures pertaining to human caused disasters and disruptions are in place.

The Town of Bennett will work with the County Emergency Management Office(s) and the Public Health Department(s) to secure necessary resources and applicable protocols.

Town leadership meets with County Health Department leadership teams quarterly to maintain communication and Adams County Health Department newsletters are shared with Town staff via the Town Safety Officer.

The Town of Bennett has a policy for essential workers through a health crisis. There is also a hybrid and remote work policy that be activated quickly, as the Town has procured the necessary software and equipment needed by staff.

**3. Mitigation Strategies**

The following short, mid and long term strategies will be reviewed, modified if needed and executed.

### Short Term (1-2 Years and/or Annually)

- Host periodic Public Health campaigns and promote the County and State campaigns.
- Ensure that the County Emergency Management Office(s) and the Public Health Department(s) are visible at public events hosted by the Town.

### Long Term (5+ Years)

- Ten years past COVID 19, where is the trust level in the community? Conduct a survey to ascertain the relationship with residents and businesses and the County Health Departments. Create an action plan, if it appears unlikely that public health orders would be trusted and followed.

## Major Retail Business Closure or Shut Down

Currently the Town has one major retailer, King Soopers. As the largest grocer along the corridor, if King Soopers were to have an emergency closure and long term shut down the impact could be swift and dramatic. There would be economic impacts to sales tax collection as well.

*Example: The King Soopers located on South Academy Boulevard is closed for the extended future after a possible asbestos contamination, no timeline on reopening...*

A framework indicates when recovery plans may be necessary during closure or shut down. The framework will include established emergency responses, communication protocols, and partnership information.

### 1. Framework

Recovery plans from a store closure would be necessary if:

- Effects vulnerable populations
- Impacts last longer than 3-4 weeks

#### a. Emergency Response

If there is physical/structural danger, fire and rescue responses would be needed.

There could there be opportunities to salvage food and supplies that the Town could facilitate or participate in.

#### b. Communication

A clear channel of communication between store authorities and Town leadership would be important.

Regular updates about the status of the closure and alternatives for shopping and delivery should be publicized.

The Town could catalog and list community resources for residents to reach out for assistance.

	CODERED	WEB UPDATES	SOCIAL MEDIA	PRINT MATERIALS	OTHER
KING SOOPERS CLOSURE		✓	✓	✓	✓

**c. Partnerships**

The local food bank operates on a regular basis and may be able to coordinate deliveries for vulnerable populations and those without transportation.

Smaller food suppliers may be able to request larger deliveries and local restaurants might be able to step in and provide some free or low cost meals.

**2. Current Systems**

The following systems and operating procedures pertaining to human caused crisis and disruptions are in place.

The Town maintains reserves to operate through a sales tax loss of up to 10%. (Sales tax revenue would instantly be impacted, but not rise to a crisis level for 6+ months.)

There are grocers in the metro area and east of Bennett, allowing the majority of residents' access to the groceries they need during a closure of King Soopers.

**3. Mitigation Strategies**

The following short, mid and long term strategies will be reviewed, modified if needed and executed.

***Short Term (1-2 Years and/or Annually)***

- Create a food contingency map for use if King Soopers is shut down for an extended period to understand where groceries can be purchased locally and at what quantity.

***Long Term (5+ Years)***

- Economic development and a growing population should bring another grocery store to the Town limits.

## ECONOMIC DISASTERS AND DISRUPTIONS



### Economic Disruptions

#### Recession and Embezzlement

A dramatic change to the revenue and/or expenditures of the Town could create a financial disruption or an economic disaster. Economic disasters and disruptions can be caused by outside forces or can have internal origins. In either case, the areas identified for recovery can be applied and used to mitigate and allow for a quicker and smoother recovery path.

The Town has one primary sales tax provider. However, there are several that could create a decrease of more than ten (10) percent should they close. A recession that affects those industries would have a stronger impact than others. Creating a diverse economic base to supply a steady source of revenue is ultimately the most resilient. An investment in the needs of the residents and those that make the economy work are also necessary to thrive and weather economic disruptions.

If embezzlement occurred resulting in reduced cash flow many problems could arise up to, but not limited to, the inability to pay vendors or meet payroll. Embezzlement could also become a significant public relations crisis.

The framework indicates when recovery may be necessary after the disaster or disruption has passed.

#### 1. Framework

Recovery plans from economic disruptions be necessary if:

- A recession resulted in an extended (9-12 months) of loss of more than 10% of sales tax revenue
- If revenue was 25% less than anticipated, there would be an impact to staffing and operations
- If cash flow became a problem

#### a. Emergency Response

The Finance Director can cancel individual credit cards or bank access as necessary for embezzlement.

In cases of impending or ongoing recessions, continual monitoring of the economic situation should become a priority. Spending and hiring may need to be evaluated. Faced with fiscal pressure, scholars suggest that local governments must choose to either increase revenues or reduce local services.<sup>1</sup>

#### b. Communication

If allegations of embezzlement haven't been proven, the Human Resources Department, with support from the Finance Department and direction from the

Town Manager, will oversee an investigation and protect confidentiality.

Regular communication between members of the Finance Department, the Administrative Services Director and Town Manager will be needed to keep everyone apprised as new information is discovered about embezzlement or recession indicators.

Community Engagement to understand the priorities and needs of businesses and residents will create buy in and commitment as difficult decisions may need to be made during recessions or economic downturns.

	CODERED	WEB UPDATES	SOCIAL MEDIA	PRINT MATERIALS	OTHER
FRAUD OR EMBEZZLEMENT		✓			
NATIONAL OR REGIONAL RECESSION		✓		✓	

**c. Partnerships**

The local banks and the credit card company being utilized by the Town can share alerts about suspicious activities or transactions with the Finance Director and Town Manager.

Small Business Development Center can provide resources for maintaining fiscal health and surviving economic disasters and disruptions to local businesses.

The I-70 Corridor Chamber of Commerce can unite with the Town to support strategies that can sustain local businesses through a recession.

**2. Current Systems**

The following systems and operating procedures pertaining to natural hazards and disruptions are in place.

Standard Operating Procedures in the Town of Bennett Finance Policy have checks and balances in place to protect against fraud and embezzlement. Town staff can access this policy on the intranet. Regular outside audits are performed by Rea & Co, CPA LLC.

**3. Mitigation Strategies**

The following short, mid and long term strategies will be reviewed, modified if needed and executed.

**Short Term (1-2 Years and/or Annually)**

- Finance Department to review reserve levels for adequacy annually.
- Finance Department to review the financial protocols annually and have periodic check ins at every level of the process.
- Finance Department to host appropriate trainings for staff within and outside of the Department.



### Mid Term (2-5 Years)

- In Economic Development, strive for diversity in sales tax generators and other revenue sources.
- Maintain and enhance existing businesses and promote local employment opportunities
- Develop a recruitment plan that aims for balance in the business sector, including manufacturing and agriculture
- The Town and Economic Development Department should host trainings for local businesses to promote the use of continuity plans and back-up systems every 2-5 years.

### Long Term (5+ Years)

- Host a tabletop exercise with Department leaders, where alternative budgets, supporting innovation, while maintaining staff and services, could be utilized during economic downturns.

## Resources

1. Municipal Choices during a Recession: Bounded Rationality and Innovation  
<https://cplg.sog.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/16800/2019/04/Municipal-Choice-1.pdf>

## Acknowledgements

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