



Orange County

Recovery and Transformation Planning Project

May 2021



HAGERTY



ORANGE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA



Agenda

Project Overview

Stakeholder Engagement

Plan Overview

Next Steps



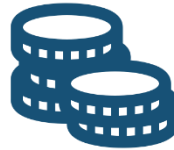
What Was the Purpose of the Project?



Analyze

Impact Assessment

- Understand the impacts of COVID-19 on economy, community health, housing, and social services.



Train

Cost Recovery Training

- Train county, municipal, and non-profit stakeholders on best practices for reimbursement under common federal programs.



Plan

Long-Term Recovery and Transformation Plan

- Describe goals, strategies and initiatives to drive community-informed recovery.



How Was the Project Organized?



Phase 1

Describe and quantify the impacts of COVID-19.



Phase 2

Establish a diverse stakeholder group to design strategies and initiatives addressing impacts.



Phase 3

Record countywide strategies and associated initiatives in the Recovery and Transformation Plan.



Phase 4

Implement the plan and monitor community needs.

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Who is Involved in Recovery Planning?

Individuals and organizations participating in the planning effort are experts and professionals across seven sectors, with over 30 different types of public and non-profit organizations in each group.

Experts and professionals across these sectors...

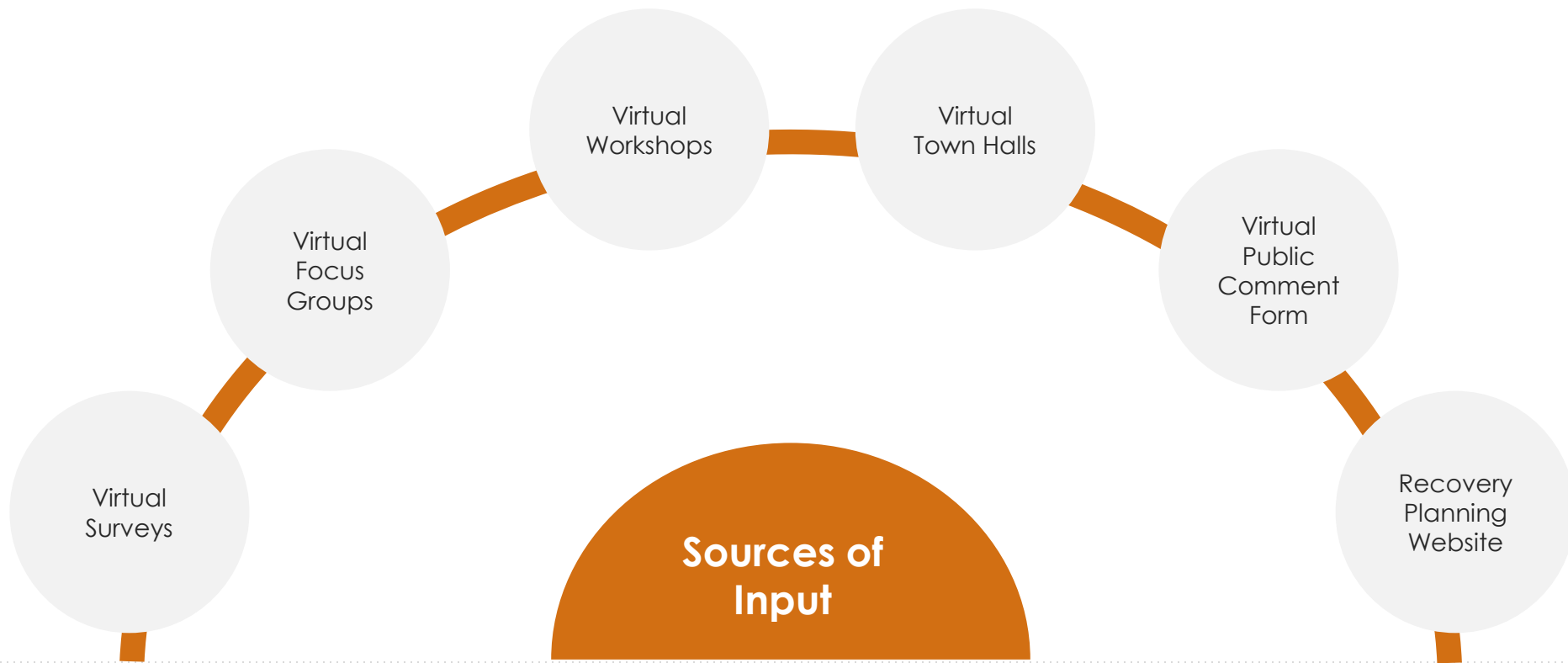
...and the public





How Did the Public Inform the Plan?

Comments received from the public were included in the plan (see *Community Input Annex*) and helped guide conversations with Orange County and municipal government to finalize the plan. It is essential to understand the public's priorities, so that recovery stakeholders can fairly distribute available resources to try and meet those priorities.



How Was Racial Equity Integrated into the Plan?

To align with the Guiding Vision and the county's efforts to achieve social and racial equity, the project held a consistent focus on equitable community engagement.



Community Leader Meetings were held to garner input from communities of color.



Public engagement materials were translated into Spanish, Mandarin-Chinese, Burmese, and Karen.



Targeted outreach was conducted to encourage communities of color to participate in plan review surveys and meetings.



Feedback from communities of color was prioritized in proportion to the elevated COVID-19 impacts they faced.



The planning process was coordinated with the efforts of Orange County's Government Alliance on Race and Equity.

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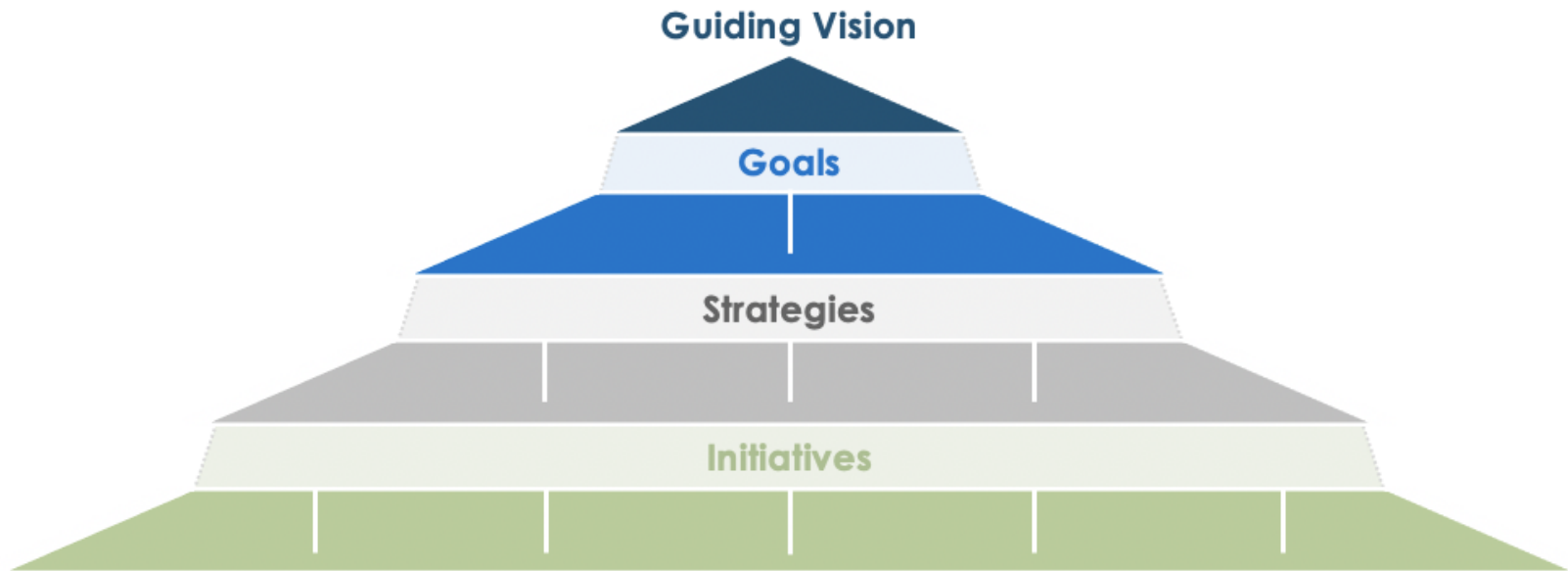
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How is the Plan Organized?





What is the Plan's Guiding Vision?

Leverage recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic to strengthen and transform Orange County by improving economic sustainability, providing resources, and achieving social and racial equity.



What are the Goals of the Plan?

The plan is based on five recovery goals, identified through community input and the gaps revealed by the Impact Assessment.



Address fundamental needs of all residents;



Create safe, stable, and affordable housing solutions;



Promote a dynamic, equitable, and sustainable economic recovery;



Streamline access to community-based resources; and



Combat the negative effects of social distancing to promote community healing.



Strategies & Initiatives: Economic

Provide support for small businesses.

- Provide direct financial support to local businesses when funding is available.
- Create the ability to quickly convert existing local funding programs to support future disaster response and recovery efforts.
- Establish communication channels between economic development practitioners as well as to and from businesses in Orange County.
- Provide technical support and business mentorship to small business owners, including e-commerce and other emerging industries.

Identify and address regulatory barriers to economic recovery.

- Examine and address barriers to starting and expanding small business and provide resources or amend policy to help businesses overcome these barriers.
- Identify and address policy and infrastructure barriers to remote work and operations, including broadband access.
- Engage operators and regulators to determine which temporary policy changes should be made permanent.

Drive local economic growth and encourage local spending.

- Develop collaborative marketing strategies to bring new business and enhanced local spending to the county.
- Increase the resilience of the county's key industries.
- Provide support to the arts and entertainment industry of Orange County.
- Build a shared understanding that a successful economy equals a successful community.

Strengthen and expand the local workforce.

- Identify and develop targeted training programs for residents to meet the needs of local employers.



Strategies & Initiatives: Housing

Incentivize the development of affordable and accessible housing.

- Evaluate housing stock, density, and regulations to reinforce policy changes that promote housing development and increase affordable housing.
- Continue to increase the number of subsidized housing units available locally and promote broader landlord acceptance of vouchers.
- Track tax foreclosures and evaluate opportunities to purchase property and develop into affordable housing.

Rehabilitate, improve safety, and preserve the affordability of existing housing.

- Investigate opportunities to change the process through which land use designations are reconsidered and adapted.
- Use flexible funding to support timely repairs, weatherization, and rehabilitation of affordable housing units.
- Increase flexible funding to continue efforts to reduce mobile home displacement on rented property.
- Use rehabilitation, repair, or modification to increase the availability of affordable housing compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Ensure continuation of and streamlined access to housing support programs, including emergency housing assistance.

- Expand capacity to support the implementation of solutions that address identified gaps in housing programs and resources.
- Continue and streamline the provision of emergency housing assistance, eviction diversion, and coordinated entry programs.
- Continue efforts to end homelessness in Orange County by addressing evolving gaps in the homeless system.
- Partner with health entities to direct funding toward housing as a social determinant of health.



Strategies & Initiatives: Health

Continue monitoring, testing, and eradicating COVID-19.

- Continue to provide equitable and accessible testing and vaccines for COVID-19 for free or minimal cost.
- Provide transportation to testing and vaccination sites from various locations throughout the county.
- Foster partnerships with educational institutions to develop comprehensive resources on disease prevention, monitoring, and reporting.

Promote economic recovery and bolster existing healthcare systems.

- Encourage local employers to partner with Carolina PROSPER to receive assistance with improving workplace safety.
- Partner with academic institutions to conduct a gap analysis of public and private healthcare, mental health, and substance abuse service providers.
- Support growth of the county's healthcare systems through healthcare-focused workforce development programs, expansion of telehealth, and appropriate liability protections.
- Work with non-profit and public entities to help individuals who are positive with or recovering from COVID-19 avoid lifelong debt.

Promote better access to mental and behavioral health services.

- Continue efforts to improve access to and destigmatize the use of mental and behavioral health support services.
- Continue efforts to improve access to and destigmatize substance-abuse support services.
- Strive to mitigate the effects of social isolation on harder-to-reach populations.
- Improve mental health care and support for first responders and medical care providers.

Address historic or systemic health disparities.

- Improve access to quality healthcare for historically marginalized communities.
- Appoint an advisory committee to address the unique needs of historically underserved communities with representation from affected communities.



Strategies & Initiatives: Human Services

Promote job opportunities that provide thriving wages or increase quality of life.

- Develop systems to connect people to job opportunities in the county.
- Perform a gap analysis to determine necessary policy changes around minimum wages and subsidized employment opportunities.

Streamline access to community resources.

- Streamline and expand food access to reduce hunger.
- Establish and advertise a centralized online database of non-governmental organizations to improve equitable access to community resources.
- Support coordination between regional, county, and municipal transportation systems by securing additional funding.
- Increase equitable access to high-quality cellular service and broadband, especially in rural areas.

Prevent widening of the achievement gap.

- Establish public-private partnerships to provide low- or no-cost after-school, weekend, and summer childcare.
- Partner with local schools to provide additional resources and outreach aimed at alleviating instability and improving at-home learning environments.
- Partner with schools to provide extra support for students with disabilities and their families.
- Establish a scalable technology support program to provide free or low-cost computer and peripheral rentals by expanding the existing Chapel Hill Laptop Lending Program.
- Provide technology training on relevant platforms to the community.



Strategies & Initiatives: Natural & Cultural Resources

Prevent the deterioration of natural resources.

- Coordinate planning efforts to understand how the community utilizes public spaces and whether the expansion of public spaces is necessary.
- Monitor and address indirect impacts from COVID-19 on the natural environment.
- Expand programs educating residents about their role as stewards of natural resources and the natural environment.

Provide cultural and recreational opportunities for all residents.

- Utilize oral histories to tell the story of the pandemic.
- Pursue opportunities to expand and pool resources across organizations and jurisdictions to coordinate and cross-promote free and safe activity offerings.
- Support and promote community-driven multicultural arts projects and programs that enable community healing, recovery, and resilience.

Support sustainable local agriculture systems.

- Provide technology training for agricultural producers to promote the utilization of e-commerce and alternative distribution models.
- Strengthen economic independence for agricultural producers and reduce reliance on grants and subsidies.
- Incentivize expansion of sustainable local food systems to provide support for families experiencing food insecurity.



Strategies & Initiatives: Community Planning & Capacity Building

Promote climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts.

- Leverage findings from the long-term recovery planning process to update climate action plans across the county.

Build collaborative programs between government and the community.

- Establish an active volunteer network by creating a countywide Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster group.
- Work with academic institutions to support student access to resources necessary for their success.



Strategies & Initiatives: Intergovernmental Affairs & Public Information

Support open lines of communication between the public and local governments.

- Align and streamline information for disaster-impacted residents across local government websites.
- Make it easier for residents that do not speak English very well to engage with local governments.
- Enhance local understanding of how community members interact with government to increase civic engagement.
- Develop a 24-hour chat portal or hotline for community members to share concerns or inquiries.

Promote equitable public engagement in planning processes.

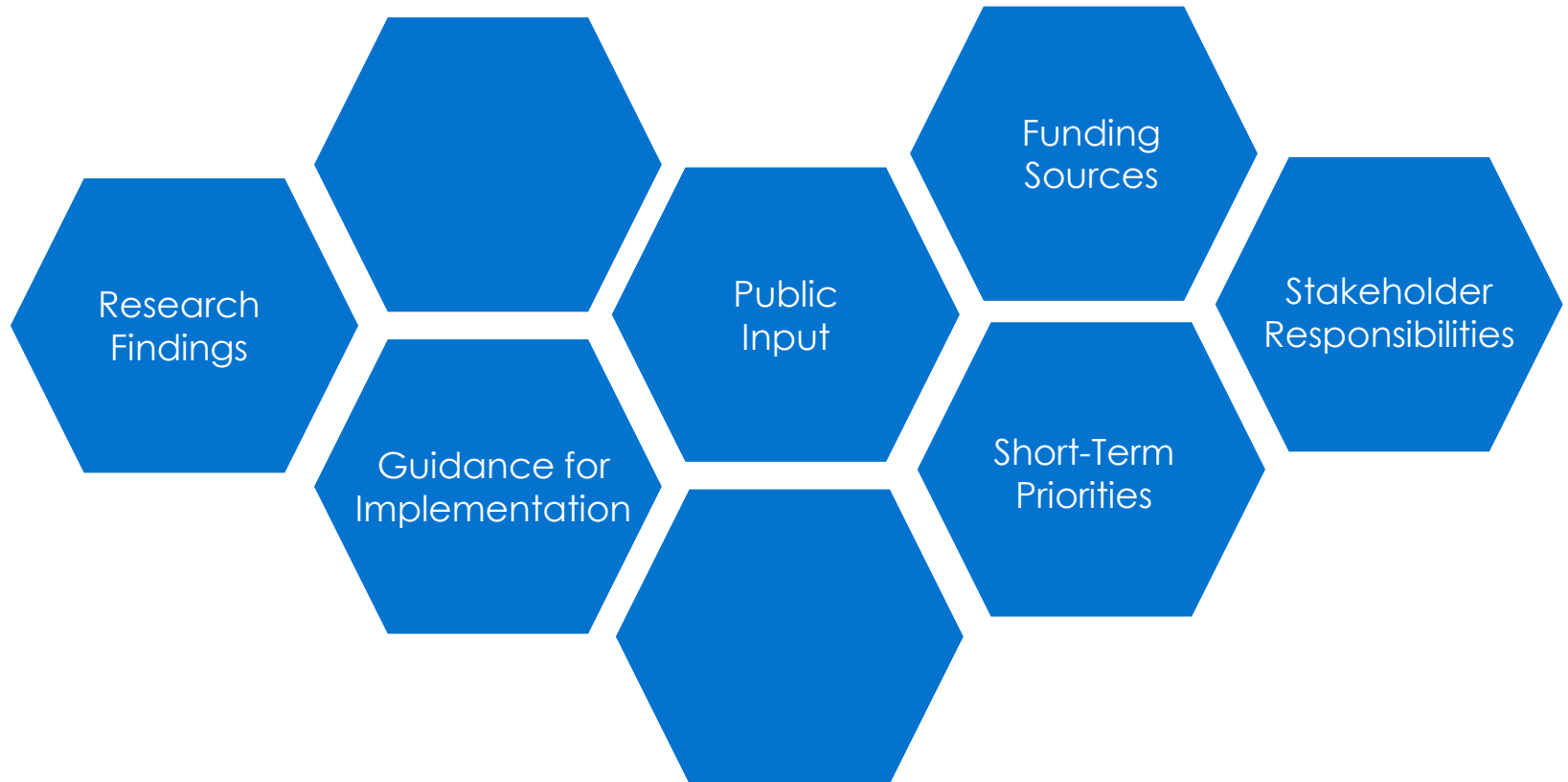
- Continue to engage the community, especially historically marginalized populations, to ensure this plan is adapted to meet the evolving needs of all residents.
- Build a culture of information-sharing to help improve racial equity planning and implementation outcomes for the whole county.

Consistently deliver essential government services.

- Develop integrated continuity of operations plans to consistently provide critical services across local governments.
- Seek and secure additional funding to continue essential emergency support services.



What Else is in the Plan?



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The Role of Elected Officials

Elected officials have an essential role in implementing and socializing the Long-Term Recovery and Transformation Plan, including the following actions:

- Reviewing the plan.
- Providing input on and endorsing the plan.
- Supporting organizations (Recovery Support Functions) implementing the plan.
- Continuing to represent community needs and elevate the concerns of the most impacted populations as the plan is revised and maintained as a living document.



Thank You!

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