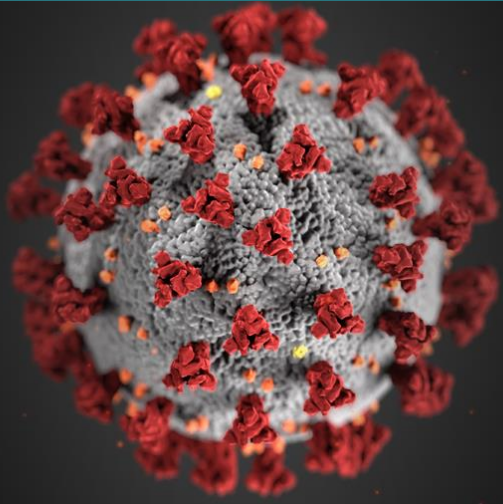


Tracking Disruption: Taking Action to Prepare for the Future



Presentation at the
Triangle J Council of Governments Regional Summit

David Rouse, FAICP, ASLA
Principal, David Rouse FAICP

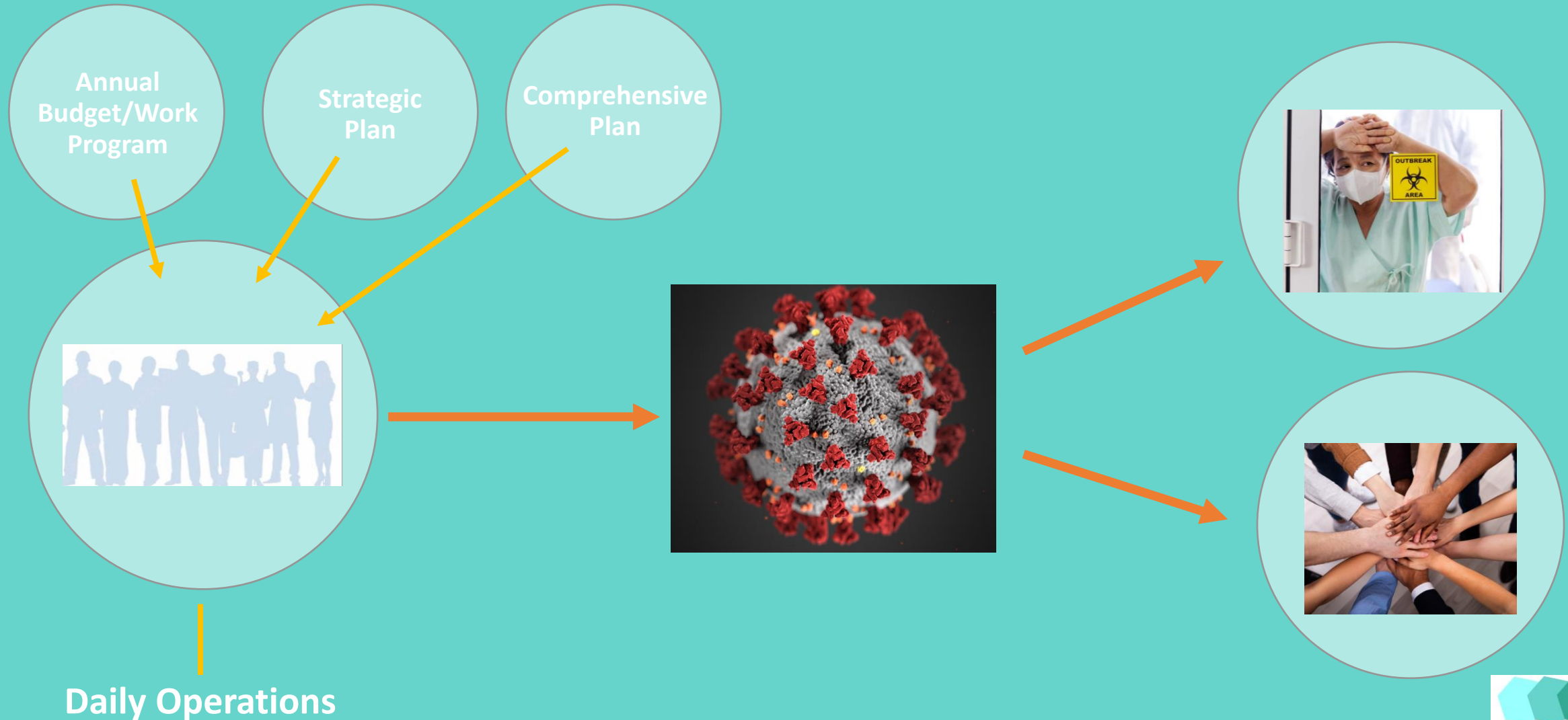
Ben Hitchings, FAICP, CZO
Principal, Green Heron Planning, LLC

October 28, 2021

Incessant Buzz of the Now



Preparing for an Uncertain Future



Practical Challenges



- A. Community stakeholders and elected leaders are focused on the now
- B. There is pressure to return to way things were before a shock (like the pandemic)
- C. Flexibility and response time are paramount



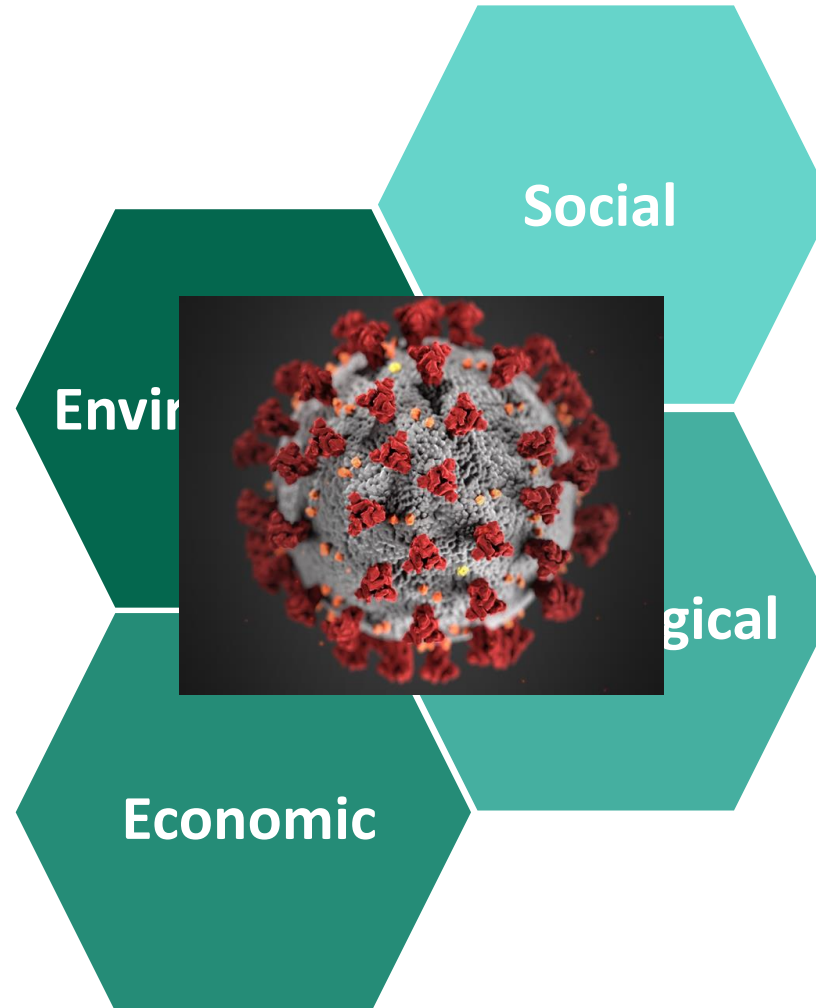
Drivers of Change Framework



- Climate change
- Energy
- Pathogens & invasive species
- Resource depletion



- Automation
- E-commerce
- Remote work
- Sharing economy



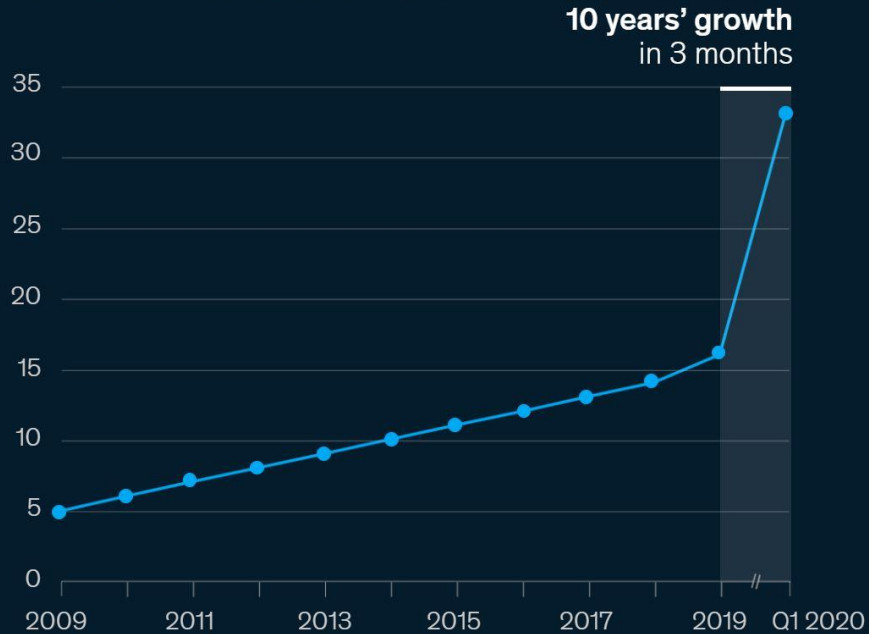
- Aging population
- Equity, diversity, inclusion
- Immigration
- Social determinants of health

- Artificial intelligence
- Autonomous vehicles
- New mobility
- Smart cities



COVID-19 Impacts: E-commerce

US e-commerce penetration, %



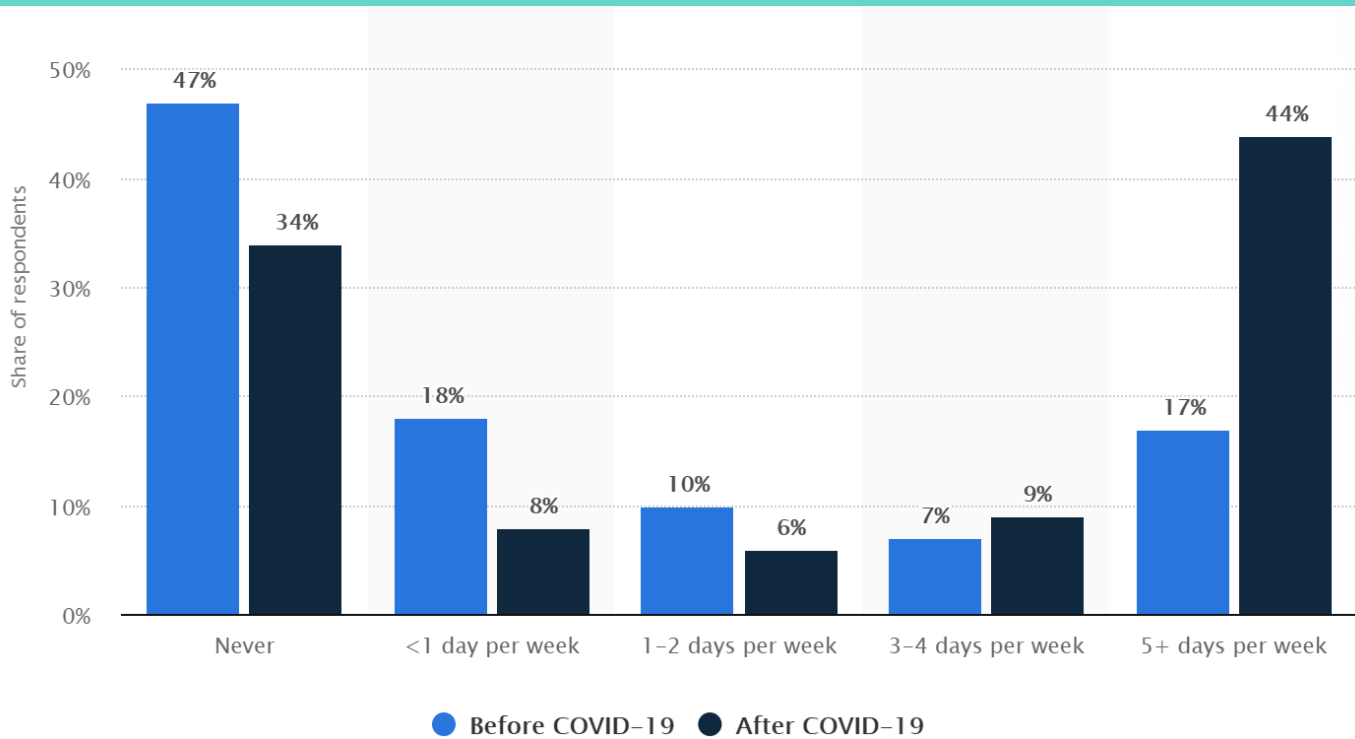
Source: Bank of America; Forrester Analytics; ShawSpring Research; US Department of Commerce; McKinsey analysis

Source: [McKinsey Global Institute](#)

- To what extent will new e-commerce behaviors that emerged during the pandemic stick?
- What are the implications for local communities (e.g., bricks-and-mortar retail)?



COVID-19 Impacts: Remote Work



Change in remote work trends due to COVID-19, 2020

Source: [Statista](#)

- How will the pandemic impact remote work trends over the long term?
- What are the implications for local communities?

COVID-19 Impacts: Parks and Health

OPEN SPACE & RECREATION EXPANDING OUR VISION OF OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS



HOW CAN WE SAFELY SOCIALIZE, EXERCISE, AND RELAX OUTDOORS IF PARKS AND TRAILS ARE CROWDED OR CLOSED?

Open space, parks, and trails in Montgomery County provide an essential respite for residents to maintain their physical and mental health. However, overcrowding and limited access to parks during the pandemic have challenged the ability to safely comply with social distancing guidelines. Not surprisingly, limitations placed on how and when existing open space areas and trails may be used have inspired an expanded vision of what recreation and "the outdoors" look like for the foreseeable future—and likely well beyond.



Bikers, walkers, and runners can safely relax and recreate in spaces temporarily claimed from vehicles.

Photo Credit: DVRPC

STREETS ARE EVERYWHERE AND CAN BE ADAPTED

Communities can look to any number of other spaces right in their own neighborhoods that can be opened or adapted for recreation. Many cities and towns have looked no further than their own streets as additional space for recreation by partially or entirely closing public streets to vehicular traffic to create a safe environment for pedestrian and bicycle mobility. These "repurposed" streets not only create additional opportunities for non-motorized activity, but they can also serve as miniature parks or "parklets." For example:

- San Francisco developed [comprehensive guidelines](#) on creating parklets—repurpose a few on-street parking spaces with some chairs, tables, and protective barriers and a



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Increased use of county trails and limited access to parks during the pandemic have inspired an expanded vision of where and how people can recreate and enjoy the outdoors.
- Cemeteries, golf courses, parking lots, and closed or "slow" streets are viable, nontraditional alternatives to conventional open space and trail resources.
- Low-stress and neighborhood streets are a convenient and readily accessible alternative to trails for bicyclists, pedestrians, and joggers.

COVID-19 quarantine is making America get creative about space. That's great for cities.

Whenever we reach our "new normal" after this pandemic, let's choose a new path.

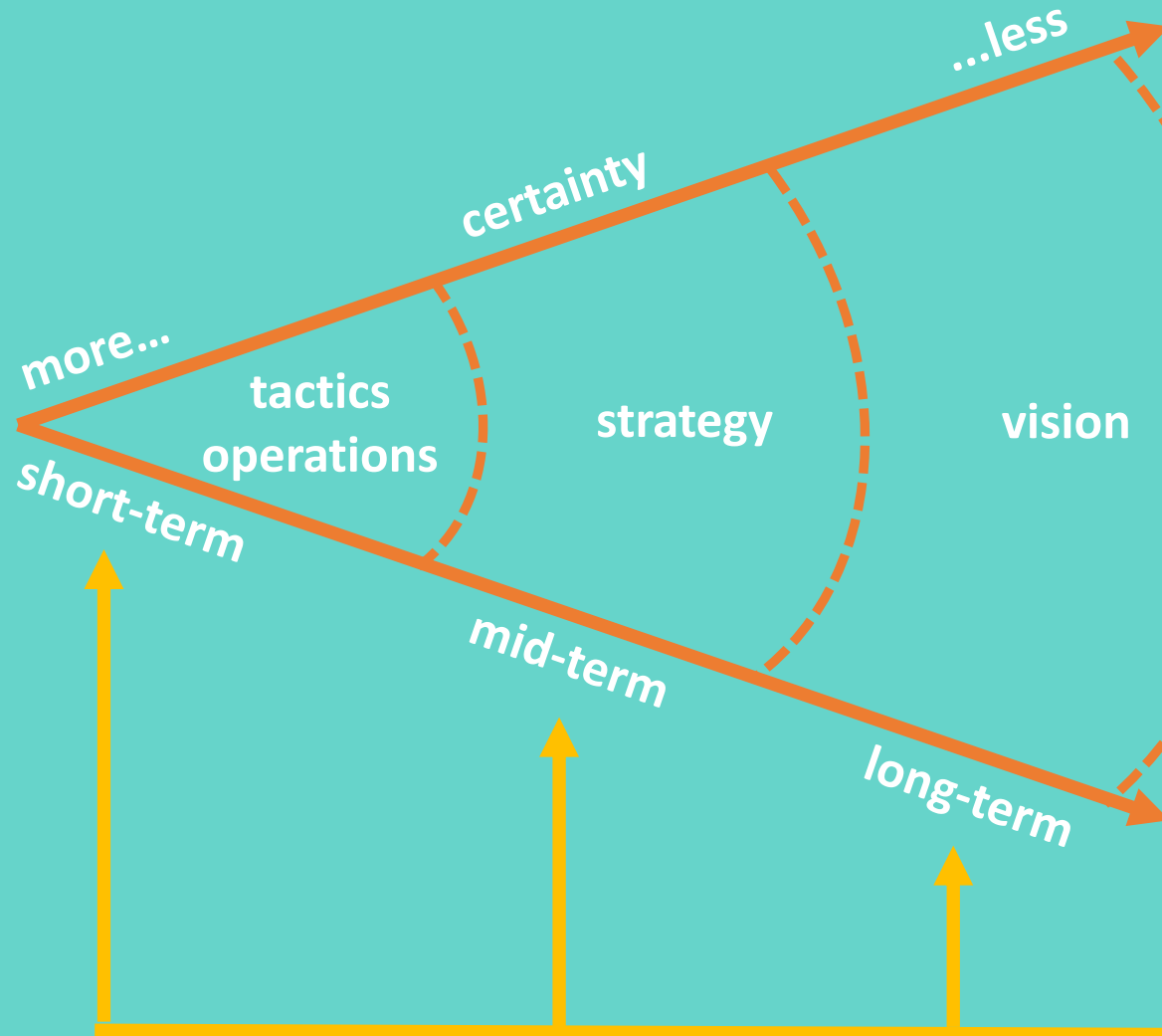


Source: [Restart Montco](#), Montgomery County, PA

Source: [Stay Healthy Streets](#), Seattle, WA

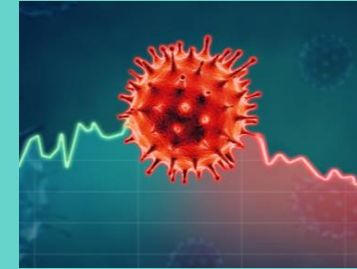


Operationalizing a Future Focus



Drivers of Change

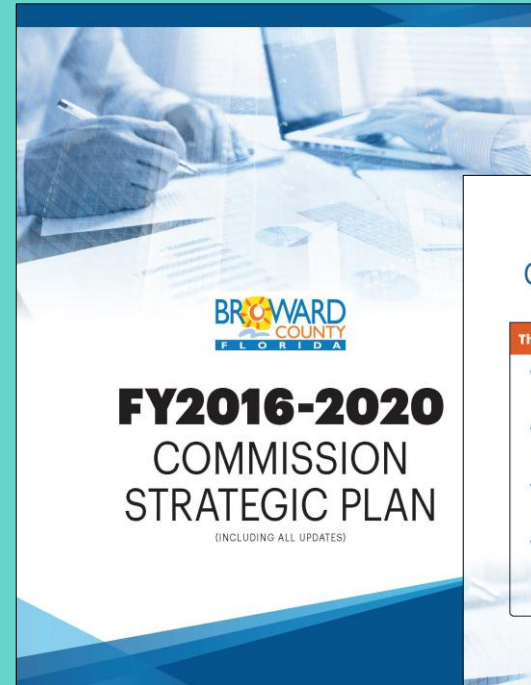
- Social
- Technological
- Economic
- Environmental



Operationalizing a Future Focus

1. Confirm Vision and Values
2. Scan and Assess Emerging Issues
3. Prioritize and Strategize
4. Take Action

1. Confirm Vision and Values



FY 2016-2020 COMMISSION STRATEGIC PLAN (INCLUDING ALL UPDATES)

The Broward County Board of County Commissioners envisions:

- From our Sawgrass to our Seagrass, a home for everyone seeking a sense of community and an exceptional destination for visitors from every corner.
- A model County, governed in an open and ethical manner where innovative ideas are encouraged, and public and private sectors work collaboratively to achieve shared goals.
- A vibrant economy with a diverse, skilled workforce offering unique advantages that attract all types of businesses to create equitable, countywide prosperity.
- A sustainable system of world-class intermodal infrastructure, quality human services, public housing, recreation, arts and culture, complemented by balancing our natural resources and environment.

A. VALUE: Ensuring economic opportunities for Broward's diverse population and businesses

Goals:

1. Attract and retain all types of business, especially high-wage industries that offer employee benefits, through partnerships with the Alliance, chambers of commerce, colleges and universities, CareerSource, and any other available avenues.
2. Increase the economic strength and impact of revenue-generating County enterprises balancing economic, environmental, and community needs.
3. Diversify the local economy, attract industries offering high-wage jobs with benefits while balancing economic, educational, environmental, and community needs.
4. Utilize policies and strategies to create employment opportunities and supports for economically disadvantaged members of the community.

B. VALUE: Prominently marketing Broward County as a brand, while increasing public understanding of programs and services

Goals:

1. Consistently and effectively market and brand Broward County programs and services, locally and globally, through effective collaboration.
2. Promote to the public, through effective diversification of mediums and messages, the County's positive works and efforts to improve the quality of life for all residents.

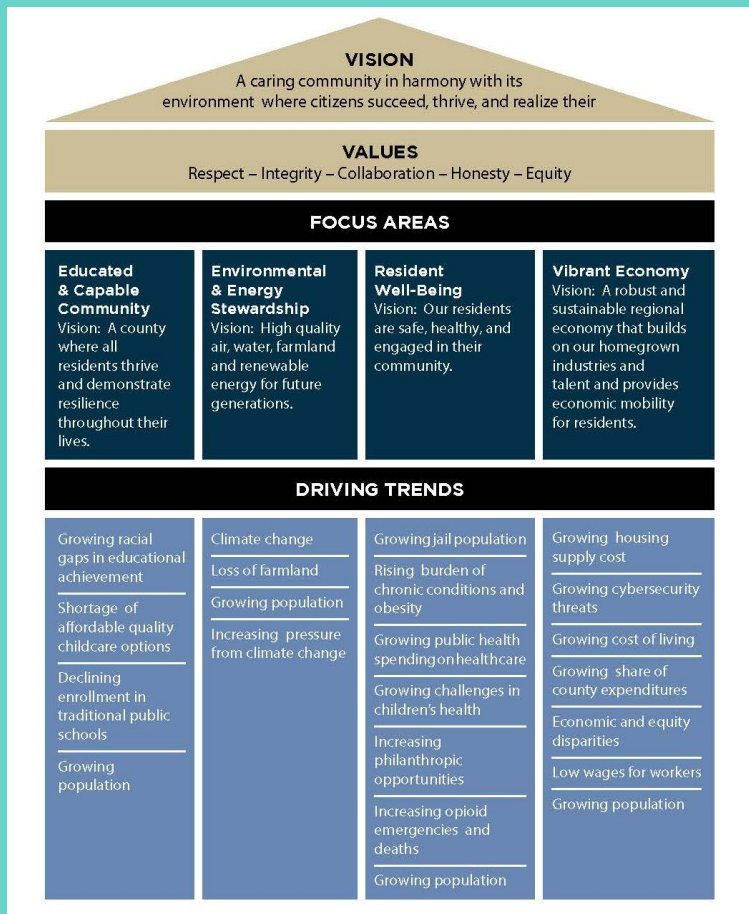
C. VALUE: Approaching human services collaboratively and compassionately, with special emphasis on the most vulnerable

Goals:

1. Effectively advocate for and acquire municipal, state and federal financial support to equitably address health and human services needs of the entire community, through a truly coordinated system of care.
2. Deliver evidence-based services to the public, and connect customers and their family members, to sustainable support, with special emphasis on financial supports.
3. Collaborate with public and private partners to find creative, equitable, and responsible solutions to systemic community problems, especially permanent, supportive housing for persons experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness.

Broward County, FL Strategic Plan

2. Scan and Assess Emerging Issues



Buncombe County Strategic Plan

Trend Cards

1. Growing Population

By 2040, the GroWNC region (Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania Counties) will be home to over 630,000 people – nearly 40% more than in 2010. This is an increase of about 178,000 people or the addition of two cities the size of Asheville. This increase is expected to translate to a need for almost 75,000 additional housing units across the five counties. Most of this growth is expected to occur in Buncombe and Henderson Counties.

Source: 2015-2019 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Madison, and Transylvania Counties, 2015; Draft French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization SE Data Development Report, 2014

4. Rising Burden of Chronic Conditions and Obesity

Chronic conditions are among the leading causes of death in Buncombe County – cancer, heart disease, chronic lower respiratory disease, cerebrovascular disease, and Alzheimer's disease.

If current trends continue, between 2016 and 2030 chronic disease could cost North Carolina \$65.5 billion in medical costs and an extra \$26.6 billion annually in lost employee productivity.

Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics, 2017; fact sheet from the Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease, accessed Aug 20 2018

13. Growing Job Automation

Automation and computing advances are expected to eliminate, redefine, and create new jobs through the 2020s and 2030s. Along the way, economic inequality and the number of un- or under-employed individuals is expected to grow.

An MIT study estimates that 54-69% of jobs in 15 North Carolina metro areas, including 68% of jobs in the Asheville metro area (Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Transylvania, and Madison Counties), may be impacted by automation. The impact is expected to focus particularly on routine clerical work such as cashier and food service jobs, but also affect jobs with more cognitive and analytical tasks such as software development and financial analysis.

Source: "In Advanced and Emerging Economies Alike, Worries About Job Automation," Pew Research Center, Sept 13 2018; "Small offices face greater impact from automation," Frank, Sun, Oelstein, Youn, and Rathwan, J. R. Soc Interface, Feb 7 2018

25. Growing Housing Costs and Supply

Between 2015 and 2019, the median sale price and the median rent list price for housing in Buncombe County have been growing by an estimated 7% and 10% respectively per year on average. Meanwhile, as of 2015, 44.5% of renters and 26% of homeowners are housing cost-burdened, i.e., housing costs exceed 30% of their household income.

Additional development is anticipated as federal, state and local programs continue to incentivize investment in communities. For example, five underserved Buncombe County census tracts are subject to the Opportunity Zone program which is intended to spur investment in such neighborhoods.

Source: Buncombe County Home Prices & Values, Zillow.com, accessed Jul 20 2019; Buncombe County Housing Needs Assessment, 2014; "North Carolina's Opportunity Zones Certified," UNC School of Government blog, Jul 5 2018


16. Increasing Loss of Farmland

North Carolina leads the nation in the rate of farmland lost to development, and Buncombe County figures show the same trend. Between 1997 and 2017, the county lost 193 farms and 22,784 acres of farmland operated, fall to a total of 1,073 farms that cover a total of 72,284 acres.

As development continues, and with natural and regulatory restrictions on steep slopes, the pressure to develop prime farmland soil increases. The agricultural sector contributes both directly to the county economy as well as income for several other sectors including the tourism industry.


Source: US Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service, 2017; communications with Buncombe County, Jul 22 2019

2. Scan and Assess Emerging Issues




Planning for Climate Resilience
City of Asheville, North Carolina

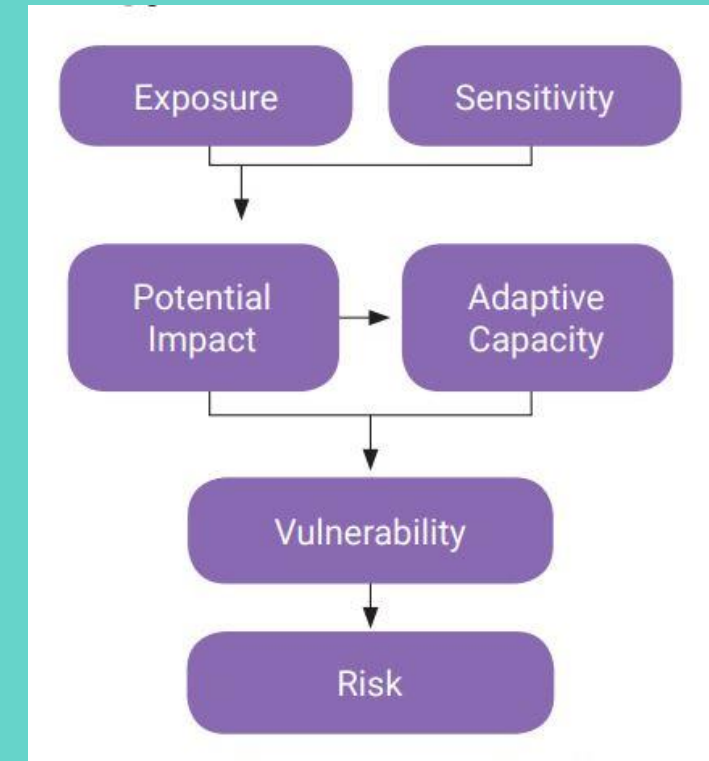
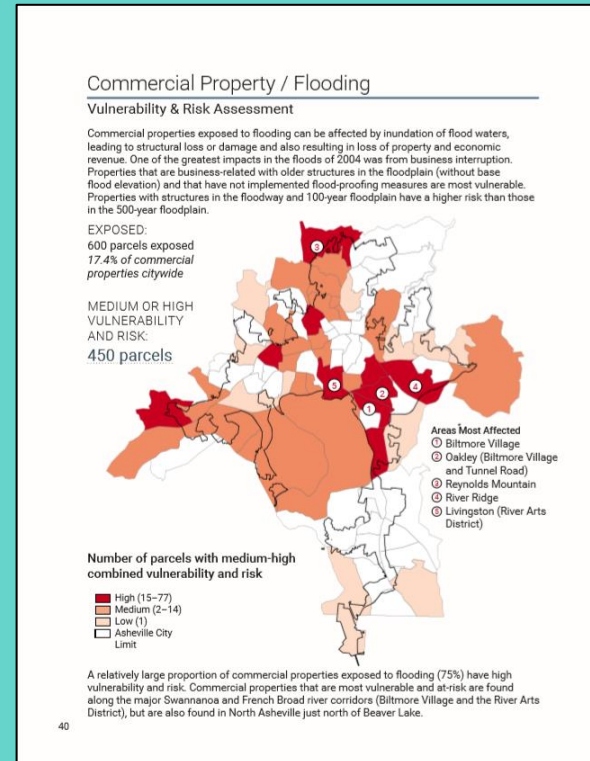
Final Assessment Report
April 2018



THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE
NORTH CAROLINA



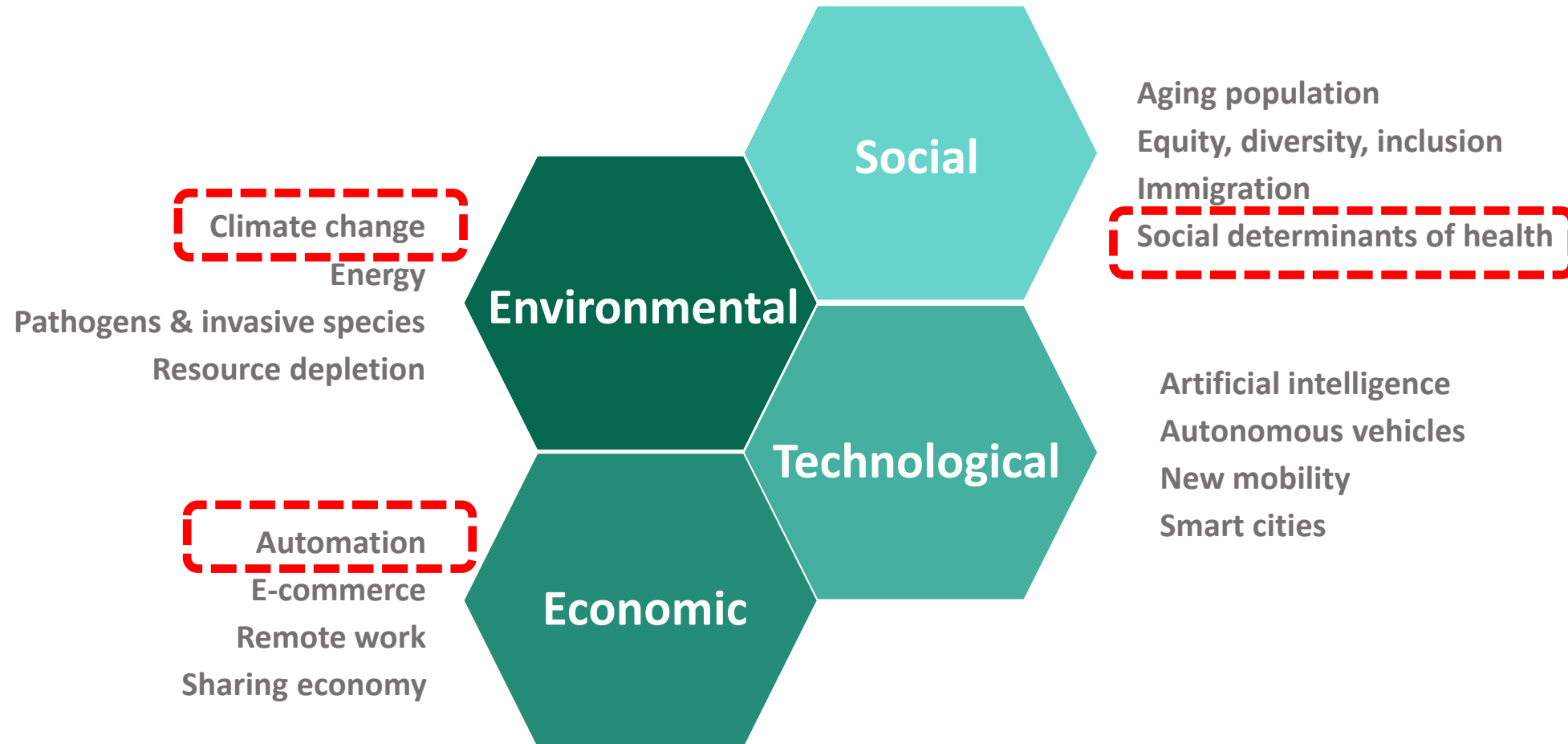
UNC ASHEVILLE
NEMAC
NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL
MODELING & ANALYSIS CENTER



Asheville Climate Resilience Assessment Report

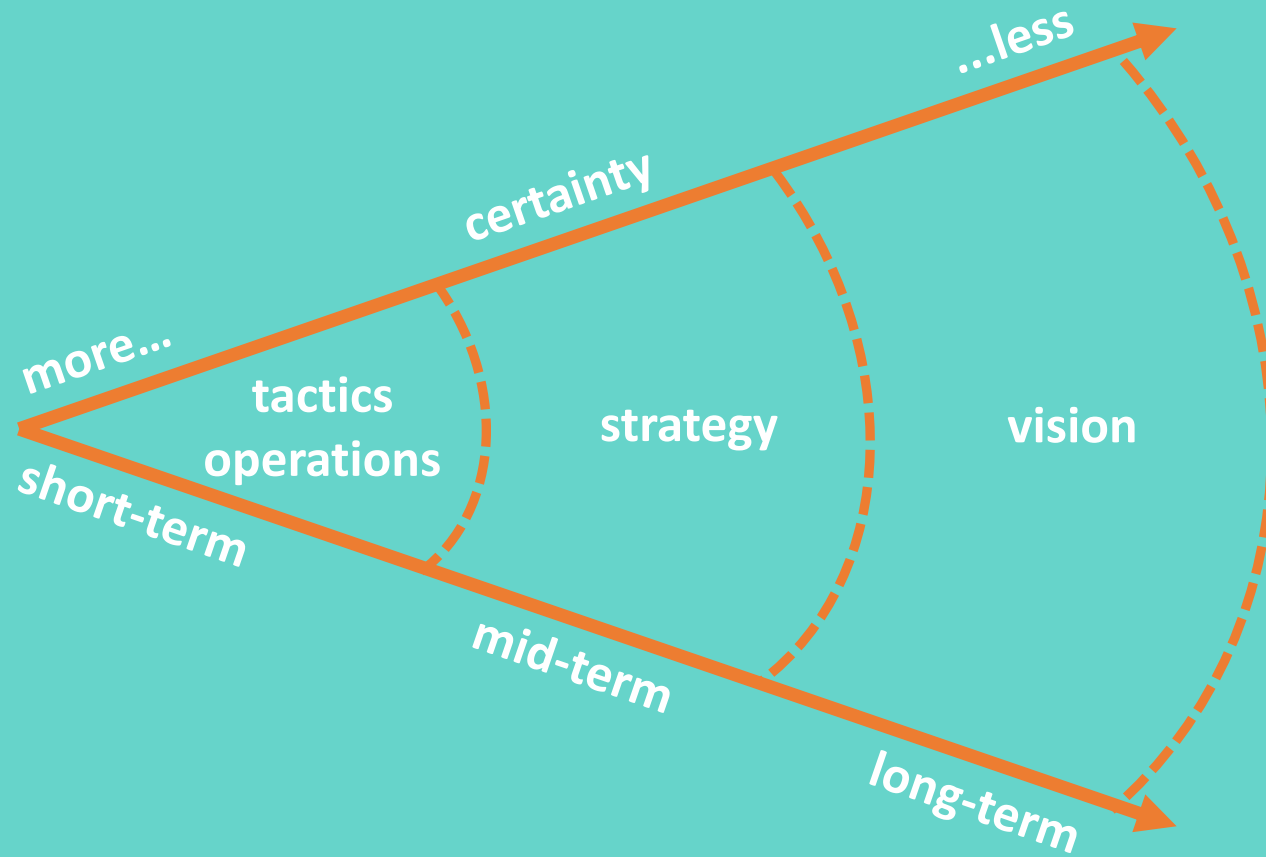
3. Prioritize and Strategize

3a. Identify priority issues to address



3. Prioritize and Strategize

3b. Develop strategies to address priority issues



Example: Autonomous Vehicles



Short-term (1-2 years)

Monitor issue, consider in fiscal investments, develop pilot project

Mid-term (2-5 years)

Develop strategies for parking, curb management, ROW design, shared vs. single (or zero) occupancy vehicles, etc.

Long-term (5+ years)

Adapt infrastructure, adjust land use patterns, address vision implications

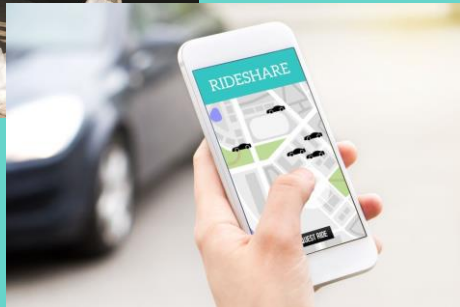
4. Take Action

Operationalize a future focus

- A. Change organizational culture
- B. Monitor drivers of change / conduct scenario planning to prepare for impacts
- C. Evolve approach to planning and policy
- D. Implement operational and capital changes



Photo Source (above):
LA Lights Smart City
Strategic Plan



Best Practice: Gilbert, AZ

Gilbert, AZ Digital Roadmap

- Established an Office of Digital Engagement in 2012
- Developed a Digital Roadmap in 2015
- Operationalized digital government through ongoing programs
 - Mobile app hub
 - Digital government podcast
 - Annual Digital State of the Town
 - Open data portal
- Quickly deployed new digital tactics during the COVID-19 pandemic



Best Practice: Henderson, NV

Henderson, NV COVID-19 Recovery Action Plan

- Conducted COVID-19 impact survey of groups representing vulnerable populations
- Hosted 20 virtual meetings; connected with 50 community partners
- Developed plan in 4 months; leveraged existing plans
- Used plan to distribute \$30 million in relief funds targeting those most in need
- Helped Henderson achieve lowest infection rates and highest testing and vaccination rates in Southern NV



Best Practice: Philadelphia, PA



Philadelphia Pitch & Pilot Initiative

- Vendors invited to pitch events to share new technologies
- Committee selects promising solutions to test through pilot initiatives
- Successful pilots become candidates for scaled-up solution
- Funds programmed in annual budget to implement solution

Taming Disruption Exercise



Step 1A: Scan

🌐 When poll is active, respond at pollev.com/proact780

📱 Text **PROACT780** to **22333** once to join

Which of the following drivers of change are impacting your community now and in the future? (select all that apply)

- A. Aging population
- B. Artificial Intelligence
- C. Automation
- D. Climate change
- E. E-commerce
- F. New mobility
- G. Smart cities
- H. Social determinants of health

Step 1B: Scan

What other issues not previously listed are/will impact your community in a significant way? (use one or two words)

Step 2: Assess

How will these drivers impact your community? (in one or two words)

Step 3: Prioritize

🌐 When poll is active, respond at pollev.com/proact780

📱 Text **PROACT780** to **22333** once to join

Which driver is the most important for your community to address? (pick one)

- A. Aging population
- B. Artificial intelligence
- C. Automation
- D. Climate change
- E. E-commerce
- F. New mobility
- G. Smart cities
- H. Social determinants of health

Step 4: Act

🌐 When poll is active, respond at pollev.com/proact780

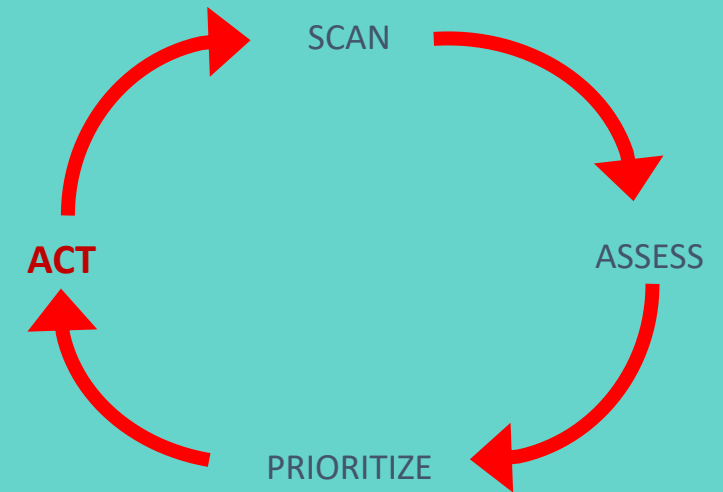
📱 Text **PROACT780** to **22333** once to join

**What actions can your community or organization take?
(select all that apply)**

- A. Regulations
- B. Capital investments
- C. Pilot projects
- D. Ongoing programs
- E. Public-private partnerships
- F. Other

Questions & Discussion

What opportunities and challenges do you see in operationalizing a future focus in your organization?



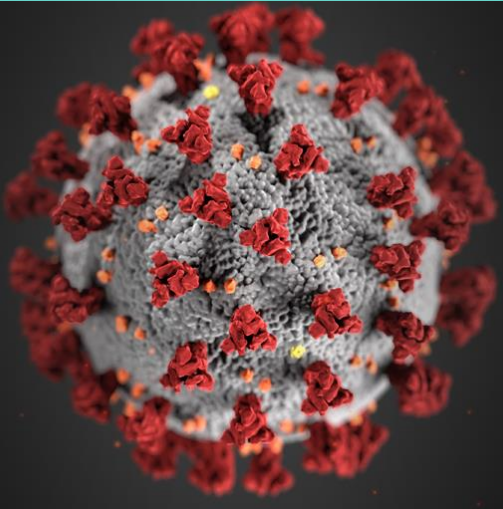
A Place to Start



Create Interdepartmental Working Group

1. Include diverse departmental representation
2. Assign management analyst
3. Start with scan of drivers of change
4. Augment with Community Working Group
5. Regularly input latest data
6. Track and prioritize issues using Cone of Uncertainty

Contact Info



David Rouse, FAICP, ASLA
Principal, David Rouse FAICP

drouse@davidrousefaicp.com
davidrousefaicp.com

Ben Hitchings, FAICP, CZO
Principal, Green Heron Planning, LLC

bhitchings@greenheronplanning.com
greenheronplanning.com