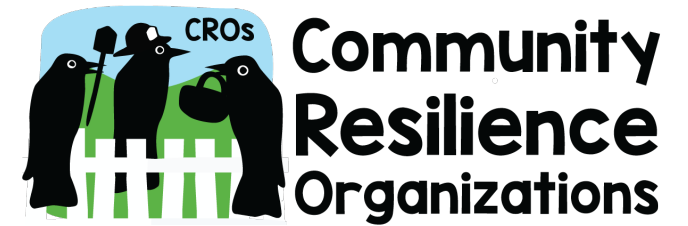


Community Resilience Self-Assessment



Community resilience is the ability of a community to prepare for, withstand, and respond to adverse situations.

True resilience requires a combination of numerous skillsets and capacities in four primary areas: 1) Basic Needs & Emergency Preparedness; 2) Environment & Natural Systems; 3) Physical Infrastructure and 4) Community Connections & Capacity. The actual skills, characteristics and qualities are different in every community.

Purpose & Development

This self-assessment was designed to help community members, local leaders and volunteers to think and talk deeply about their community's resilience strengths, challenges and priorities. It is also designed to help communities learn about different aspects of resilience and track their progress over time. It is not designed to give a quantitative score or estimate of resilience, or to compare one community to another.

The specific characteristics included here were developed through a combination of research (studies of resilience and resilience components, other resilience scorecards, and community indicators), observation of resilient communities, and lessons from on-the-ground projects and programs. They are open to debate and may vary by town. They should not be interpreted as firm rules, but as a guide to what community resilience *might* look like and a *prompt for discussion*.

Instructions

1. Rate your community's current resilience in each category

- For each individual category (such as Food supply), read through the descriptions from left to right. Check the number that you think best represents where your community is today.
- Your community will likely have some characteristics under multiple numerical headings. Choose the option that is the closest fit. If you don't have enough information to decide, leave the row blank.

2. Rate the priority of each resilience category for your community

- In the category box at the left, enter a value for priority from 1-5. A value of 1 means you think that category should be a top priority for resilience work in your community, or you think that category is extremely important for resilience. A value of 5 means you think it is not important or should be a low priority.

BASIC NEEDS & SERVICES

The basic needs (food, water, energy, emergency response, medical attention & other supplies) that people and communities need in order to survive.

Category & Priority

1=very important

5=not important

Score (How does your municipality currently measure up in this area?)

	1	2	3	4	5
Food supply Priority: <input type="text"/>	More residents (than average VT town) food insecure; few or no diversified farms; few residents grow or store food; no food sources in town (stores, farmers markets, food shelf)	More residents than average food insecure; little food available or stored locally; few options for acquiring food in town	Some residents food insecure; some residents & farms grow and store food; adequate food store(s) in town; stocked and maintained food shelf	Fewer residents food insecure; significant food grown and available from diversified farms; many residents grow & store food; multiple food sources in different parts of town	Few residents food insecure; many diversified farms and/or local food outlets; many residents grow and store food; community gardens & gardening skills common; food sources accessible everywhere
Energy independence & stability Priority: <input type="text"/>	Nearly all homes, businesses & public facilities reliant on electric grid and non-renewable energy sources for power; few or none have backup power and heat; one municipal power source	Most homes and businesses rely on grid & non-renewables; some residents have private backup generators; critical town facilities have backup; one municipal power source	Some homes & businesses use off-grid and renewable energy; many homes and facilities have backup power and heat; major town facilities have backup; town using some renewable energy; one alternative power source	Many homes and businesses off-grid and using renewable energy; much of community has extended backup power; community-scale renewable energy projects under way; multiple transmission lines or power sources	Many homes and businesses using off-grid and renewable energy; much of community energy independent; most of community has extended backup power and heat; multiple transmission lines or power sources
Health care Priority: <input type="text"/>	No health center, hospital or providers in town; no public health officer; no inventory of resident healthcare/EMT skills; no pharmacy	Inadequate health officer coverage; no inventory of resident healthcare/EMT skills; no pharmacy	Some local providers or health center; active health officer; limited inventory of residents with healthcare skills; limited pharmacy	Adequate health providers for physical & mental health needs; well-stocked pharmacy or an emergency pharmaceutical stockpile; skilled health officer; and/or inventory of healthcare assets & skilled residents willing to assist in an emergency	Strong & coordinated local mental & physical health provider network ready if town were cut off; well-stocked pharmacy or an emergency pharmaceutical stockpile; skilled health officer
Business planning & preparation Priority: <input type="text"/>	Businesses not integrated into local resilience planning; businesses have no individual plans and no mitigation actions identified; no resources available	Largest businesses plan for emergencies; no integration with or resources available for small & med businesses; few mitigation actions taken	Large & key businesses have COOPs (Continuity of Operations Plans) & take some mitigation actions; businesses integrated into municipal planning; regional resources available & known	Resilience planning (town plan or hazard mitigation plan) considers businesses; many businesses have COOP plans & have taken critical mitigation actions; outreach resources offered; process to report business losses to town	Municipal resilience planning integrates businesses; most businesses have COOP plans; most have taken critical mitigation actions; resources available are promoted; process to report business losses after a disaster

<p>Housing</p> <p>Priority: <input type="text"/></p>	<p>○ 1</p> <p>No inventory of housing vulnerable to hazards exists, but such housing (already constructed and/or allowed to be developed) is present and vulnerable residents may be housed in vulnerable structures</p>	<p>○ 2</p> <p>Housing vulnerable to hazards is present; plans note this but don't inventory or address; also noted that vulnerable residents are in vulnerable housing without steps to address this</p>	<p>○ 3</p> <p>Inventory of vulnerable housing completed & plan(s) include steps to prevent further vulnerable housing development; some outreach to residents in vulnerable housing; "healthy homes" and "weatherization" programs are underway to both reduce toxic exposures (lead, asbestos, radon, etc.) and improve heating/cooling efficiency</p>	<p>○ 4</p> <p>Inventory of vulnerable housing completed; strong incentives or regulations to make new housing safe and weatherized; steps taken to reduce vulnerability of existing housing; plan for outreach to all residents in vulnerable housing and process is in place for reporting housing related damages to the town/RPC following an event</p>	<p>○ 5</p> <p>New housing is built in safe locations using best practices for resilience, healthy materials and weatherization; inventory of vulnerable structures and people complete & action steps being implemented; most vulnerable residents now in safe housing; process in place for reporting damages following an event</p>
<p>Emergency shelters</p> <p>Priority: <input type="text"/></p>	<p>○ 1</p> <p>No designated shelters, or only shelter is vulnerable to flooding, readily cut off from large parts of town, and not well known</p>	<p>○ 2</p> <p>One or more well-sited shelters in place; not well known</p>	<p>○ 3</p> <p>Sufficient shelters stocked and posted, no plan for power outage for more than 24 hours or provision for pets</p>	<p>○ 4</p> <p>Sufficient shelters for people and pets with independent power/heat to serve all neighborhoods for 1-3 days; no plan for extended duration beyond 3 days</p>	<p>○ 5</p> <p>Well-known, sufficient shelters with water/ food/power sources planned for 3-5 day duration, including for pets; information resources widely advertised</p>
<p>Emergency services, providers & volunteers</p> <p>Priority: <input type="text"/></p>	<p>○ 1</p> <p>Inadequate emergency services (responders poorly trained, emergency services located out of town, inadequate supplies; too few local responders); no coordination between emergency departments; inadequate or outdated local emergency operations plan (LEOP)</p>	<p>○ 2</p> <p>Limited emergency services in town; few responders with training and limited equipment; little coordination among emergency departments; LEOP is minimal but current; only one person with all or most knowledge of emergency procedures</p>	<p>○ 3</p> <p>Adequate responders with current training; adequate equipment; clear & coordinated plan; strong coordination with nearby towns; at least three people knowledgeable about LEOP & procedures</p>	<p>○ 4</p> <p>Many skilled & well-trained responders with adequate equipment; strong coordination in town & with nearby towns; multiple people know LEOP & procedures; emergency info clearly posted & shared publicly; plans & drills for all likely hazards and isolated areas; occasional community education</p>	<p>○ 5</p> <p>Many skilled responders & volunteers with advanced training; adequate equipment; strong coordination & plan; trained backup manager; emergency info shared widely; annual community emergency educational outreach; clear plan & distributed resources for all likely hazards, isolated areas and vulnerable populations</p>

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL SYSTEMS

Strong and functioning natural areas and environmental components (rivers, water bodies, soils, forests and air) that provide essential community services (flood protection, air filtering, stormwater filtration, stable slopes).

Category & Priority
1=very important
5=not important

Score (How does your municipality currently measure up in this area?)

	1	2	3	4	5
River corridors & floodplains Priority: <input type="text"/>	○ 1 Many floodplains & streambanks degraded, unstable, and built on; most riparian landowners unaware of best practices; no municipal flood hazard bylaw or hasn't been updated since 2005; little or no floodplain data beyond FIRM (Federal Insurance Rate Maps) ; no public support for river corridor protection	○ 2 Many floodplains & streambanks degraded and built on; many riparian landowners unaware of best practices; older flood hazard bylaw meets minimum federal requirements and participating in the NFIP (National Flood Insurance Program); digital FIRM maps available ; little public support for river corridor protection	○ 3 Some public streambank & floodplain protection & restoration; some landowners protecting riparian areas; flood hazard bylaw meets higher standards or follows the state model; NFIP participation; minimal building requirements in flood hazard areas; state river corridor maps in use, publically visible high water marks in place	○ 4 Significant public streambank & floodplain protection & restoration; some buffers & corridor protection occurring via easements; some resources & outreach to riparian landowners to promote mitigation activities; flood hazard bylaw meets higher standards or follows the state model; use of river corridor maps is encouraged guiding new development location choices	○ 5 Extensive, integrated streambank & floodplain protection & restoration; strong buffers & corridor protection in place; landowners educated & supported in implementing best practices; NFIP CRS (Community Rating System) member; municipal bylaws protect river corridors from new development (based on river corridor maps)
Sensitive natural areas Priority: <input type="text"/>	○ 1 No municipal mapping, planning, protection or consideration of sensitive lands (wetlands, unique ecosystems, steep slopes etc.); many sensitive areas degraded or built on	○ 2 Plans rely on state maps of sensitive areas; minimal consideration & protection for sensitive areas; many sensitive areas degraded or built on	○ 3 Plans identify some key sensitive areas beyond state data; some sensitive areas degraded; some community groups restoring areas and educating public	○ 4 Plans include strong local inventory and address sensitive areas; community groups actively working to restore areas & educate public; some local resources available for purchase & restoration	○ 5 Strong local inventory & protection of most sensitive areas; strong coordination of public & private efforts to restore & protect sensitive areas with some local resources; strong public education efforts and outreach to landowners
Open spaces & public access Priority: <input type="text"/>	○ 1 Limited or no publicly accessible open space and access to water; public sites degraded, unsafe, and unmarked; limited or inappropriate use	○ 2 Few publicly accessible open spaces and water access points; inadequate parking, safety, and public information; limited or inappropriate use	○ 3 Some public open spaces and water access points; sites protected from potential damage; sites have adequate parking, safety & posting; limited public education, awareness; active public use but limited stewardship	○ 4 Multiple disconnected publicly accessible open spaces and water access points; sites protected from potential damage; strong parking, safety, posting & public information; strong education, awareness & stewardship programs	○ 5 Multiple open spaces; strong accessibility & connectivity; strong protection, safety, repair, posting & information; sites integrated into local plans; active stewardship, plans & resources for long-term expansion, improvement & stewardship

<p>Farming and forestry</p> <p>Priority: <input type="text"/></p>	<p>○ 1</p> <p>Few working farms and/or forests; no community gardens or forests; no guidelines for farm & forestland in municipal plan beyond reference to state best management practices. No land conserved.</p>	<p>○ 2</p> <p>Some active farm and/or forestland with little connection to municipal planning or actions; outreach provided on minimum state environmental practices; no community gardens or forests. Little land conserved.</p>	<p>○ 3</p> <p>Strong working farms & forests; municipal plans address and suggest best practices for soil & water conservation (aimed to improve water retention); community forest and/or farm exists but with limited use for public outreach demonstrating best management practices. Some land parcels conserved.</p>	<p>○ 4</p> <p>Strong working farms & forests using best practices for soil (aimed to improve water retention) and water conservation; outreach to landowners & support for implementing techniques; municipal forest or farm demonstrates best practices. Some streambank, farm and forestland conserved with stormwater management as a goal.</p>	<p>○ 5</p> <p>Strong farms & forests using best practices for soil and water conservation; local regulations require soil and water conservation design in new development & incentivize good management practices; regular outreach & resources for landowners; significant block of farm and forestland conserved.</p>
<p>Invasive species</p> <p>Priority: <input type="text"/></p>	<p>○ 1</p> <p>Numerous and extensive invasive species present; extent undocumented; invasives causing damage or problems for property or environmental function; no public control measures in place; no public education</p>	<p>○ 2</p> <p>Significant invasive species presence; extent undocumented; invasives causing limited damage or problems for property or environmental function; few public control measures in place; no public education</p>	<p>○ 3</p> <p>Some invasive species present; extent informally documented; invasives causing limited damage or problems for property or environmental function; adequate public control measures in place; little public education</p>	<p>○ 4</p> <p>Some invasive species present; extent documented; invasives causing few problems for property or environmental function; strong public control measures in place; significant public education & involvement in control</p>	<p>○ 5</p> <p>Some invasive species present; extent thoroughly monitored; invasives causing few problems; integrated public & private control measures in place; strong public education & involvement in control & restoration</p>

PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Strong and protected roads, bridges, culverts, utilities, public & private facilities & services.

Category & Priority
1=very important
5=not important

Score (How does your municipality currently measure up in this area?)

Roads & transportation infrastructure

Priority:

○ 1

Many roads, dams, bridges, ditches, culverts in poor condition and frequently damaged; roads rebuilt same as before; key roads vulnerable to closure with few alternate routes; no inventory or plan for maintenance

○ 2

Some infrastructure in poor condition; backlog of culvert and ditch maintenance; steep or floodplain roads frequently damaged, but improved with repairs; some roads vulnerable to closure; few alternate routes

○ 3

Town meets recommended state road standards with most infrastructure in adequate condition; public culverts kept clear, ditches maintained, roads repaired using best practices; key roads have alternate routes

○ 4

Most infrastructure in good condition; some vulnerable roads moved or changed after major damage; best practices in place; alternate routes in place for main roads; updated culvert inventory and maintenance

○ 5

Most infrastructure in excellent condition, public & private culverts & ditches inventoried, clear and maintained; best practices applied; most vulnerable roads have alternate routes

Cellular service and broadband accessibility

Priority:

○ 1

Most of community without cell service & broadband or high-speed internet; no free Internet available; no backup hotspots for outages

○ 2

Cell service and limited broadband available in central parts of community; many residents disconnected; no free Internet available; limited private hotspots for outages

○ 3

Cell service and broadband available in much of community; some residents disconnected; limited free Internet in public facilities; limited private hotspots for outages

○ 4

Cell service and broadband available in most of community; most residents connected; free high-speed wireless Internet available in village or downtown; backup hotspots available centrally for outages

○ 5

Cell service and broadband accessible throughout community via multiple providers; most residents connected; free high-speed wireless available in village or downtown; backup hotspots available in neighborhoods

Public & private facilities

Priority:

○ 1

Numerous public & private facilities vulnerable, in disrepair, inaccessible to many residents; no inventory of public facility vulnerabilities or plans for addressing; no outreach or assistance for vulnerable private facilities

○ 2

Some public facilities are vulnerable and need improvements; some inaccessible to many residents; plans note vulnerability without strategies for improvement; no outreach or assistance for vulnerable private facilities

○ 3

Some public facilities vulnerable; most public facilities in good repair and accessible to residents; plans inventory & include recommended action to address; limited resources for critical improvements; limited outreach or planning for private facilities

○ 4

Most public facilities have low vulnerability, are in good repair and accessible; plans inventory and address vulnerable facilities; clear plan of action and resources for key improvements; strong outreach and planning for private facilities

○ 5

Most facilities accessible, not vulnerable and/or redundant services in place; town has clear plan of action for relocating or addressing vulnerability in remaining facilities; outreach and resources available for private facilities

Stormwater management

Priority:

○ 1

No local requirements for private stormwater management (such as culverts or surface runoff); some failure to meet or enforce state environmental laws; no inventory of inadequate sites & practices; inadequate municipal stormwater management infrastructure and no green infrastructure projects; no public education

○ 2

Few local requirements for private stormwater management; municipal & private stormwater management practices have no local technical review; no inventory of inadequate sites & practices; weak municipal infrastructure and no green infrastructure projects; no public education

○ 3

Some requirements to upgrade or meet standards for private development (such as enlarging washed out culverts); some municipal reduction of stormwater runoff from roads, driveways, and parking lots through standard practices; limited public education

○ 4

Local regs encourage green infrastructure techniques (vegetated swales, rain gardens and more) in commercial and private development; inventory of culverts & stormwater sites with plan for priority replacements; ; strong municipal practices exceed state standards; education & model green infrastructure projects, including community benefits from natural floodplains

○ 5

Green infrastructure techniques required during development review wherever possible; inadequate infrastructure replaced; municipality uses best practices & green infrastructure to reduce & treat stormwater; participates in watershed-wide stormwater strategies; strong education & resources for developers & homeowners on green infrastructure techniques

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS & CAPACITY

The connections, relationships, networks, resources and structures that enable government, residents and community groups to effectively function, solve their own problems, and thrive.

Category & Priority
1=very important
5=not important

Score (How does your municipality currently measure up in this area?)

	1	2	3	4	5
Community leadership Priority: <input type="text"/>	Community leaders (government, social services, emergency, environment, education, etc.) don't communicate with, don't know each other well or trust each other	Community leaders rarely communicate, don't know each other well or have little trust, but can function together on critical tasks	Some community leaders communicate & collaborate some of the time - mostly when required	Key community leaders respect each other and communicate regularly; leaders work well together when necessary	Many diverse community leaders regularly communicate, respect differences, trust each other, and collaborate easily
Community planning Priority: <input type="text"/>	Outdated plans (Hazard Mitigation, Town Plan, environmental and emergency plans) or insufficient plans; lack of coordination among plans; no overarching community vision; plans written by a few town officials; narrow focus and no public input	Some plans in place, but no cross-referencing among them; few or weak action strategies; no overarching community vision; plans written with few town officials, narrow focus and little public input	Adequate plans in place; some cross-referencing; some action strategies; limited or outdated community vision; some public involvement; some consideration of economic, social and environmental needs	Strong and current plans in place which refer to each other and address social, environmental, economic and hazard mitigation issues; strong action strategies; plans developed with diverse leadership and significant community input; based on community vision	Strong and current plans cross-reference each other; robust integration of social, environmental, economic and hazard mitigation issues; ambitious and collaborative action steps; plans based on widely-supported community vision and developed with broad community input
Communication & transparency Priority: <input type="text"/>	Few or poor communication channels; no forum for community discussion; no options with loss of power or service; many residents feel disconnected; no plan for improving the lack of connection; open meeting laws not enforced; information hard to find & understand	Some communication channels; limited forums for community discussion with infrequent participation; few options in emergencies; no plan for improving lack of connection; limited transparency in government; minimal sharing & distribution of information	Adequate range of communication channels and forums actively used (tv/radio, newspaper/newsletter/mailings, listserv or online forum, bulletin boards); informal means to reach disconnected people in emergencies (via community meetings, neighborhood watch)	Strong variety of communication channels with active use; strong forums for community discussion; nearly all residents connected to multiple channels; emergency communications plans in place; info posted quickly & in multiple locations; community groups actively share info and reach out	Varied & active communication channels; vibrant discussion forums; near 100% connectivity; emergency communications plan; info posted quickly, broadly, in accessible formats; community groups have systems to coordinate info sharing

<p>Civic engagement</p> <p>Priority: <input type="text"/></p>	<p>○ 1</p> <p>Few people attend public meetings; very few volunteers for projects & committees; few or no active community groups; people uninformed, uninterested and don't proactively address issues, and rely on government to solve problems; leaders discourage participation</p>	<p>○ 2</p> <p>Some few people attend public meetings or dominate conversations; limited volunteers for projects & committees; limited community groups and activity; many people uninformed & don't prioritize or proactively address issues; formal & informal barriers to participation</p>	<p>○ 3</p> <p>Some few people attend public meetings; more people participate in bigger events; adequate volunteers for committees & projects; most people somewhat informed and interested; few people proactively create solutions; some feel barriers to participation</p>	<p>○ 4</p> <p>Many diverse people actively participate in public meetings and events; active discussions & initiatives occur outside of public meetings; plentiful volunteers for projects & committees; leaders encourage participation in multiple venues and from frequently under-represented groups such as youth, seniors, disabled and minorities</p>	<p>○ 5</p> <p>Most citizens engage in public issues & processes in diverse ways; meetings & events well-attended and representative; plentiful volunteers for projects & committees; culture of collaborative & proactive problem-solving & community building; leaders actively seek diverse participation in multiple venues</p>
<p>Community spirit & sense of place</p> <p>Priority: <input type="text"/></p>	<p>○ 1</p> <p>No community-wide gatherings or celebrations; no neighborhood or NGO groups, clubs or gatherings; no informal gathering places or public spaces; animosity may exist between community groups; negative community identity</p>	<p>○ 2</p> <p>Few or poorly attended community-wide celebrations or gatherings; few or poorly attended NGO or neighborhood groups, clubs or gatherings; some community groups invisible or marginalized; inadequate gathering places or public spaces; groups rarely mix; no community cohesion or shared identity</p>	<p>○ 3</p> <p>One or more community-wide celebrations or gatherings; some neighborhood or NGO events with some participation; underrepresented groups are not marginalized; gathering places or public spaces are adequate; some shared community identity</p>	<p>○ 4</p> <p>Multiple community-wide celebrations attract many diverse participants; regular neighborhood or NGO gatherings engage diverse range of people; community networks & underrepresented groups identified & invited; adequate & vibrant gathering places; strong cohesion & local pride</p>	<p>○ 5</p> <p>Regular community-wide celebrations & events help diverse groups meet & mix; community networks & underrepresented groups identified, supported & welcomed; inviting gathering places bring people together; vibrant sense of community & pride</p>
<p>Self-sufficiency & preparation</p> <p>Priority: <input type="text"/></p>	<p>○ 1</p> <p>Residents & organizations do not have emergency plans, emergency kits or resources; property & valuables not protected; not prepared to be self-sufficient in short- or long-term emergencies</p>	<p>○ 2</p> <p>Some residents, organizations and neighborhoods prepared and have plans; some property protected; could be self-sufficient for short emergencies (1-2 days of power outage)</p>	<p>○ 3</p> <p>Many have plans & kits and could help unprepared neighbors; much property protected; most could be self-sufficient in short-medium emergencies (3-5 days)</p>	<p>○ 4</p> <p>Most have plans, kits & supplies; neighborhood or groups prepared to help others; vulnerable populations & needs identified; neighborhoods & clusters could be self-sufficient for a week or more</p>	<p>○ 5</p> <p>Nearly all residents, organizations & neighborhoods prepared for emergencies and prepared to help others; vulnerable populations & needs identified with plan to meet needs; community could be self-sufficient for lengthy disruptions</p>

This tool was created by Rebecca Sanborn Stone and Peg Elmer Hough, AICP, with financial assistance from the National Life Group and technical input from many. See www.gocros.org for more information about Community Resilience Organizations (CROs).