



Local Government Solutions Guide Overview

1. Local Government Solutions Guides and Case Study Supplements

Three “[Local Government Solutions Guides for COVID-19 and Beyond](#)” and were created by FEMA in response to the economic recovery challenges state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) governments have faced due to COVID-19. The resources cover three topic areas focused on Adaptive Design, Grants Management Capacity, and Alternative Public Service Solutions with case studies supplements for each topic drawn from communities of various sizes and types including: rural communities, small towns and cities, non-rural county governments, mid-size cities, large cities, and tribal communities.

The guides, each approximately 30 pages, provide background on the various solutions communities are pursuing to provide local government services in the face of COVID-19 related budget shortfalls and public health considerations. **The guides provide general guidance and link to resources to provide readers an opportunity to dive further into solutions that best suit their community. These documents do not provide recommendations and best practices.**

2. Audience for Local Government Solutions Guide Documents

The Local Solutions Guides and case study supplements are written for local government leaders involved with budget development, economic development, emergency management, and planning of communities of all sizes. We envision this resource will be used by FEMA Regions, national associations, and other federal agency partners to share with their stakeholders as communities begin to plan for recovery from COVID-19 and beyond.

Please contact cpcb-rsf@fema.dhs.gov with any comments or questions.



Guide Development

Feedback from national associations, FEMA regional contacts, and federal partners that work with local governments was used to identify local governments’ largest obstacles to recovery from COVID-19. This approach was taken in order to draw on the local knowledge of these partners and expediently assess key general challenges, given the broad diversity of local government, in both type and size, across the nation. This process also included a review of surveys and data sources partners have compiled directly from local governments. From these discussions we identified the three guide themes: Adaptive Design, Grants Management Capacity, and Alternate Public Service Solutions.

Another gap identified was the diversity of local government types and the desire for peer to peer engagement among communities of similar population or governance. As a result, for each of the three topic areas we developed case study supplements, where possible focused on COVID-19 examples and reflecting communities of different type and size.



3. Local Government Solutions Guide Topics



ADAPTIVE DESIGN

The Adaptive Design Guide covers four sub-topics that describe short- and long-term approaches to community revitalization and development: public space, building, zoning, and community engagement. The first three sub-topic sections consider the impacts of COVID-19 on how people use community spaces and how local governments can support healthier spaces for whole community recovery. The discussion on public space emphasizes consideration for locations to prioritize, ways different types of public space can be converted, and considerations for how to do so. The building section considers ways buildings can be adapted for community health and ways that unoccupied buildings can be repurposed to provide social services or housing. The third section, zoning adaptations, examines ways that SLTT governments can align some of the strategies discussed in the public space and building sections with local ordinances, either through relaxation or amendment. Finally, a fourth section, community engagement, emphasizes the need for community input throughout the decision-making process, with considerations for both virtual and non-virtual participation.

GRANTS MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

The Grants Management Capacity Guide seeks to simplify the process of building local government capacity for grants management through this comprehensive explanation of a grant's entire lifecycle. To do so, it covers seven steps of grants management from pre-award to post-award (Project Development, Funding Identification, Proposal Preparation, Proposal Submission, Award Acceptance, Award Management, and Award Closeout). Additionally, this guide has incorporated tips that can help smaller communities secure funding through use of federal/partner technical assistance and cost saving measures. It also highlights major impacts to grants management brought about by COVID-19 at the close of 2020. While this guide is focused on federal grant programs, many of the tools and practices discussed within it are general enough to also assist with non-federal grant program applications.

ALTERNATIVE PUBLIC SERVICE SOLUTIONS

The Alternative Public Service Solutions Guide (APSS) proposes methods local governments can use to provide ongoing services or partner with others to meet residents' needs despite budget constraints. As local governments face continued fiscal stress, alternative models for delivering public services can provide economic relief while promoting innovation and growing stronger networks among municipalities. Within in APSS there are different models for rethinking public service funding and delivery, which can address varied needs from recovery and planning to stewardship of parks and waters to delivery of public safety services. The guide is divided into five subsections describing different types of solutions: Crisis Budgeting, Private Sector Expertise (Public-Private Partnerships), Local Organization Partnership, Horizontal Integration (Shared-Service Agreements) and Expertise and Technical Assistance (Universities/Foundations). While there is variation in the steps for each of the solutions, all these innovations require: Community Engagement, Communication, and Partnerships.