

**COVID-19 Response Strategies**

**Background and Situation Analysis**

The COVID-19 pandemic has created an unprecedented threat to public health and the economy. While there are many questions still outstanding around the next steps and impacts related to COVID-19, it is clear that normal as we know it will not be returning within the next 18-24 months. As an economy, we were not prepared for a pandemic and it caused devastating impacts on our community. Some people are drawing correlations to the 2008 economic downturn, but the complete and utter shutdown of our economy will have far greater consequences. Sadly, many businesses will struggle to ever fully recover.

While it is easy to focus on the doom and gloom, there have been a number of bright spots that we recognize may change our community for the better. There is a uniting factor of “We can get through this” that is helping people recognize that we may be more alike than we thought. The use of technology and creative commerce from businesses has been inspiring. And people are more aware of connections and relationships than ever before.

The Arvada Chamber mission is to serve as a catalyst for solving Arvada’s most critical business challenges and a champion for advancing a thriving community. Within the scope of our mission and our long tenure of serving our community our role is more important than ever. The Chamber along with the incredible community leaders and partners who serve Arvada have a distinct place in assisting in the short and long term recovery efforts for our community.

The road to recovery will require substantial collaboration, communication, innovation and grit. This document serves as an initial outline of what steps will be need to be considered as we move toward the thriving economy that we all are eager to see again.

**Considerations, assumptions and opportunities**

The Arvada Chamber of Commerce has the potential to serve as a source for timely and critical resources and opportunities for businesses to evolve in to a new “normal”. This will require a new way of thinking and an ability for the Chamber and all of our businesses to be nimble and innovative. Below we have outlined a series of considerations, assumptions and opportunities that may exist as we exit the Stay at Home Orders.

* People will have an improved sense of how their support makes a difference for local business.
* Employers will need to have an extreme awareness internally and externally around health and safety. Many employers will consider offering permanent strategies around social distancing.
* Employer costs per employee may increase as they need to navigate additional considerations related to benefits, insurance and safety of employees.
* The concept of “remote work” may become a reality for many employers. This could have an unfavorable impact on commercial leasing and lead to deeper candidate pools for those hiring.
* Businesses may be more conservative with the funds – a focus on “cash position” and being able to pass any stress test that comes their way.
* Technology use for meetings, trainings and project management will become increasingly normal. Due to this people’s expectations around the length and productivity of meetings may shift.
* Opportunities for automation may be considered by a variety of employers.
* People are being overwhelmed with information and may seek “quick tips” and easy to digest content.
* Businesses will need to consider how the implement multiple business lines and stacked enterprises to build resilience and strength in the future market.
* People will be seeking new ways to connect with each other and creativity in connection will be critical.

**Business Recovery Efforts**

We are thinking about this work in three phases that each require different levels of support, engagement and tone. It is important that each of the challenges and action outlined below maintain some level of flexibility due to the unknowns associated with the current situation. The below assumptions are being made based on the promoted timeline to a vaccine.

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| **Action Steps Required To Support Expedited Recovery** | | |
| **TIMELINE** | **CHALLENGE** | **ACTION REQUIRED** |
| **Current**  (March-May) | Concerns around information overload and misinformation. | * Business Toolkit * Challenge summary docs * Webinar/Townhall Series * Hired Fox Rothschild LLP |
| Businesses need opportunities to promote that they are open or have made changes to their business. | * Takeout Takeover * Gift Card Hub * Creative Commerce + Video Series * Virtual Experiences * #Shoplocal deals * Virtual Ribbon Cuttings |
| A united front needs to be developed across the community. | * Arvada Resiliency Task Force * Chow for Champions * Support of PPE, Blood and food drives * Business outreach campaign * Impact and Opportunity survey and follow-up * Adam’s County Business Support Core Team |
| Immediate workforce concerns and impact due to closures. | * Workforce Toolkit * List of employers who are hiring * Adult pipeline activation and support |
| **Short term**  (June-September) | Residents need to support local businesses to get the economy moving. | * Convert Arvada Insider to a recovery piece with increased distribution * Launch a Shop Local Campaign * Develop a Dine Local program/event |
| Support businesses in developing innovative strategies and improvements to thrive. | * Implement a business “pulse” mechanism to understand exactly what businesses need * Continued training opportunities that promote technology and resiliency skills. * Promote and educate around health and safety best practices. |
| Identify opportunities to reduce unemployment rates and support economic vitality. | * Support an assessment of high-demand and high risk industries. * Redeploy workers to high-demand sectors with skill overlap * Identify resources and programs that can reskill and upskill workers to maximize the rebound |
|
| **Long term**  (September 2020 –December 2021) | Offer and implement strategies that improve business resilience and strength. | * Business Summit (Virtual or In-Person) * Consider “Business Resiliency Bootcamp” |
| Identify long term strategies to improve unemployment and our local workforce system. | * Evaluate innovative solutions to enable workforce shifts * Continue to build relationships within the youth pipeline to support long term hiring success. |



**INTERNAL**

**Arvada Chamber of Commerce Continuity Planning**

**Background**

On March 6 the Arvada Chamber started our work on COVID-19 by lifting the Resource Toolkit on our Web site. As closures, started to hit Arvada we quickly supported efforts to develop the Arvada Resiliency Taskforce to utilize collective impact to support our businesses during this crisis. We have continued to ask the question on a daily basis – “What do our businesses need right now?” We have supported a variety of programs to help answer that question and will continue to evolve and add to that effort.

This sudden shift required all 5 full time employees of the Chamber to move to 100% support of the crisis. This also required that we think bigger than our membership base and determined that during this time we are here for ALL BUSINESSES. The Chamber team has been diligent in supporting outreach to all businesses in the community.

As we consider the next phase of this work it will be important that we do not get stuck thinking about “how things used to be”. If we as an organization can think outside of the box in how we drive favorable economic outcomes in Arvada the Chamber and our business community will come out of this stronger.

**Internal Planning Considerations and Discussion**

* Priority Areas: Under the current planning assumptions it is believed that all 6 priority areas still serve a clear and distinct value proposition. We will need to quickly evaluate the outcomes and tactics under each of these to make sure that we are providing the resources that meet today’s business needs. Additionally, we believe that adding a priority area of BUILDING BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY RESILENCE should be a new area of focus. Over the coming weeks the Chamber team, board and other key leaders will evaluate the next steps in creating a nimble and innovative strategic plan that supports our new normal.
  + Improving Your Talent Pipeline
  + Advocacy For Your Business
  + Developing Your Future Leaders
  + Improving Your Access To Healthcare
  + Growing Your Network
  + Activating Your Story
  + NEW: Building Business and Community Resilience (Needs wordsmithing)
* Technology Usage: The Chamber should consider being a leader in how we utilize technology to connect with our businesses and community. This will offer new opportunities for communication and the ability to quickly flip all strategies to virtual if needed.
* Membership Model: As the Chamber has been serving as more of a community organization over the past few weeks it would be an interesting to evaluate different version of “membership”.

**Budget Considerations and Opportunities**

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| **Budget Overview** | | | | | |
|  | **Approved 2020 Budget** | **2020 YTD (Mar 31)** | **Scenario 1** | **Scenario 2** | **Scenario 3** |
| **Scenario** | *This budget was approved in December 2019.* | *Overview of money that has been received YTD.* | *Assuming March-May closures and limited business interruption (30% member loss and programmatic and events impact) upon return. Assumes public convening’s allowed as of June 1, 2020.* | *Assuming March-May closures and moderate business interruption (40% member loss and program impact) upon return. Assumes public convening’s limited to 50 people or less through the remainder of 2020.* | *Assuming March-May closures and moderate business interruption (40% member loss and program impact) upon return. Assumes NO public convening’s for the remainder of 2020.* |
| **Income** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Expenses** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Net** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Current Cash Position** |  | | | | |
| *In the above scenarios adjustments were made for reductions in memberships, events and program fees on both income and expenses, but did not account for additional potential new revenue and additional expense reductions as those items are pending discussion. Additionally, we wrote in some opportunities for taking events and programs “virtual” with limited revenue potential.* | | | | | |

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| **Assuming Scenario 3 – Worse Case** | | |
| **Budget Gap** |  | |
| **Income Potential** | Emergency Response Funds |  |
| Taste of Arvada – Converted to Dine Local Program |  |
| Development of “solid” member outreach and support strategies (multi-year memberships, etc) |  |
| Implementation of Innovation Webinar Series |  |
| Consider Fee For Service Model |  |
| **TOTAL** |  |
| **Expense Reductions** | Spending freeze on “non-essential” items |  |
| Temporary removal of IRA Match |  |
| Payroll |  |
|  | **TOTAL** |  |
| **Proposed Net** |  | |

**Current Decisions for Consideration**

* 2020 event adjustments
* Contingency plan for the remainder of the year and thinking in to 2021
* Revised Budget Approval
* Revised Strategic Plan
* Determine desired outcomes internal and external
* Additional Organizational Shifts Needed