COMMUNITY RESILIENCY
IN COLORADO

In November 2016, the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade released the report, *Rural Economic Resiliency in Colorado: Study of Factors Impacting Resiliency*, prepared in partnership with researchers at the University of Colorado, Leeds School of Business. The report presented a comprehensive analysis of factors that affect economic resiliency in Colorado communities with a particular emphasis on rural communities. It identified a series of drivers of, and challenges to, resiliency based on the research and focus groups with community leaders conducted in select counties across the state. The insights from these focus groups help to understand other factors promoting or inhibiting resiliency that may not be apparent in the numerical data. These drivers and challenges include:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>DRIVERS OF RESILIENCY</th>
<th>CHALLENGES TO RESILIENCY</th>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of Life</td>
<td>Housing Availability &amp; Supply</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education &amp; Healthcare</td>
<td>Labor Market</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Leadership</td>
<td>Youth &amp; Family Retention</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industry Diversity</td>
<td>Smart Growth</td>
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<td>Transportation Access</td>
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Libraries have long been drivers of resiliency, even if those terms typically have not been applied to describe what libraries do. Public libraries have a history of supporting and strengthening their communities at times of significant change, including periods of rapid expansion and innovation in the economy (first with the rise of the industrial economy and now in response to the evolving needs of the digital, knowledge and creative economies), greater mobility among the population and new waves of immigration.

The metamorphosis from book repository to learning platform, civic hub and community beacon showcases the vast knowledge and skill set of librarians across Colorado and across the country. The creative and innovative activities taking place at Colorado libraries connect well to the identified drivers of resiliency and address the challenges of resiliency that communities are facing as depicted in this poster presentation.

Even those drivers and challenges that do not seem to have an obvious connection to current library programs and services (Transportation Access, Housing Availability & Supply, Smart Growth) present opportunities for libraries that seize upon key trends in technology, such as advances in broadband connectivity that enable people to live and work in small and rural communities while participating in markets across the state, nation and even around the world.

As Colorado libraries turn outward and engage more intentionally with partners in the community, they and their partners will continue to reimagine their respective roles in supporting efforts at the state and local levels to make their communities more resilient. The statewide focus on resilience and the information presented in these posters about the ways in which Colorado libraries are currently using their assets of people, place and platform to address these drivers and challenges will be the starting point for our discussions at the Aspen Institute Colorado Dialogue on Public Libraries.

# ResilientCO
COMMUNITY RESILIENCY IN COLORADO

**DRIVERS OF RESILIENCY**

- Quality of Life
- Education & Health Care
- Community Leadership
- Industry Diversity
- Transportation Access

**CHALLENGES TO RESILIENCY**

- Housing Availability & Supply
- Labor Market
- Youth & Family Retention
- Smart Growth

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Public libraries serving Colorado communities

2015 county populations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Population</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denver</td>
<td>683,096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand</td>
<td>14,615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Juan</td>
<td>705</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At least one library in the county provides programs for:

- Jobs (e.g., rural workforce center)
- Civic engagement (e.g., community meeting convener)
- Creation (e.g., crafting or 3D printers)
- Literacy (e.g., English classes for immigrants)

Based on a survey of library directors and/or review of library websites, March 2017.

Colorado State Demography Office
https://demography.colorado.gov/population/data/zone-county/
drivers of resiliency

QUALITY OF LIFE

Summit On-the-Go library materials in bus/transit centers for resort workers who rely on public transportation
 – Summit County Public Library

“HOW TO ADULT” SERIES ON FIRST APARTMENT, CAR MAINTENANCE
 – West Custer County Library District

CO-HOST DOCUMENTARY WITH LOCAL THEATER
 – Cortez Public Library

Block parties in parks, fire stations and new neighborhoods; ballet/symphony performances
 – Anythink

PREPARING TAXES FOR LOW-INCOME SENIORS
 – Fowler Public Library and Hugo Public Library

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drivers of resiliency

EDUCATION & HEALTH CARE

HOME SCHOOL GROUP LEARNING PROGRAM
– Canon City Public Library

Health nurse via Skype™ for appointments and screenings
– Nucla Public Library

Host Science Fridays to account for four-day school week
– Meeker Public Library

GIRLS EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM
– Pueblo City-County Library District

ROBOTICS FOR MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
– Fort Lupton Public Library

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drivers of resiliency

COMMUNITY

LEADERSHIP

“Coffee with the Community,” hosting local officials
– Gunnison Public Library

LIBRARY IS THE OFFICE OF THE LOCAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
– Limon Public Library

Working with Fort Lyon Supportive Residential Community Entrepreneurs
– Las Animas-Bent County Library

MEET THE MAYOR TWICE A MONTH
– Berthoud Community Library District

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challenges of resiliency

ABOR MARKET

Resume workshops taught by county workforce center
– Loveland Public Library

Bizboost for entrepreneurs to get resources and critical data for market plan success
– Denver Public Library

Public computers for workforce account and resume creation – library waives time limits for job seekers
– Akron Public Library

Beta testing for space science institute exhibits
– Louisville Public Library

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challenges of resiliency

**RETENTION**

**YOUTH & FAMILY**

Nutritious food pantry (Take one, leave one) – Carnegie Library of Trinidad

Virtual legal clinic – Pines and Plains Libraries

Medicare/Medicaid experts – Durango Public Library

**BILINGUAL STORY TIME**

– Eagle Valley Library District

**READING TO DOGS IN LIBRARY, FOR RELUCTANT READERS**

– Jefferson County Public Library

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