

# FINAL COVID-19 RECOVERY & RESILIENCE ACTION PLAN



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# FINAL COVID-19 RECOVERY & RESILIENCE PLAN: TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	4
An Invitation to Action .....	4
Purpose of This Plan.....	5
Our Shared Values .....	6
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	7
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b> .....	9
<b>COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT</b> .....	12
<b>SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS</b> .....	14
Investing in Our Physical Infrastructure .....	16
Weaving the Social Fabric .....	18
Designing Better Ways of Working Together .....	21
Focusing Our Strategic Planning, Policy and Advocacy.....	22
<b>CONCLUSION AND FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES</b> .....	24
<b>APPENDIX A: COMPLETE COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS</b> .....	29
<b>APPENDIX B: ICG FORMATION AND COLLABORATION</b> .....	96

# INTRODUCTION

## An Invitation to Action

These are unprecedented, difficult times for our community. Organizations, businesses, governments, schools, and individuals are all struggling with wild uncertainty and new challenges almost every day because of the COVID pandemic. Our daily lives and livelihoods have irrevocably changed. The stories of pain and loss are insidious and overwhelming. Moreover, not only has COVID-19 added formidable new difficulties, it has exacerbated profound structural inequalities and vulnerabilities that existed before the pandemic – and threatens to perpetuate those for years to come.

These times therefore call for deeply collaborative and fiercely courageous approaches from us and from our community. As elected leaders from four separate local governments, we instinctively came together in strength and unity to forge through the challenges ahead. We immediately recognized the power, passion and potential among our diverse and talented communities and quickly set up a new structure to embody, empower and embolden collective action. We issued a broad call to action for anyone and everyone to participate in creating a plan for immediate action on COVID recovery and one that supports long-term resiliency. The emphasis was on what organizations, businesses and individuals can all do together, with our governments serving in convening, coordinating, supporting and enabling roles.

Dedicated groups and individuals across all sectors in our region have answered that call. They've met regularly, worked tirelessly, engaged creatively and acted quickly. They've inspired and humbled us by their thoughtful, collaborative and powerful response. They've given us all a source of hope in otherwise dark times that our community has what it takes to get to the other side of the pandemic – and perhaps emerge even stronger and more resilient.

This community-generated plan is the beginning of our recovery from COVID. Perhaps more importantly, this plan marks the beginning of a new era of community-led interagency collaboration whose sustained benefits are only starting to take shape. Please join us in reading this plan, finding your role in making it come alive, and committing to act together for our community's brighter future.

Commissioner Kate Dean, Jefferson County  
Commissioner Pete Hanke, Port of Port Townsend  
Commissioner Jeff Randall, Jefferson Public Utility District #1  
Councilmember Ariel Speser, City of Port Townsend

## Purpose of This Plan

This Recovery and Resilience Plan is an action-oriented, community-driven and united blueprint for COVID recovery.

Its purpose is to focus and prioritize our collaborative efforts, and to:

- **Communicate** a common vision for our community and what recovery and resilience should look like locally in the coming months
- **Build the capacity** of our partner agencies and of the wider community, growing an irresistible proposition for further, deeper and broader collaboration
- **Clearly signal** our unified approach and priorities to regional, state and federal agencies in order to maximize speed and effectiveness of any forthcoming financial or policy assistance
- **Help to reshape** how our local governments work, with a stronger focus on community participation and partnership, productive and informative civic dialogue and sustained progress toward shared prosperity

The plan aims to achieve these things at three scales:

1. **The Executive Summary** tells a crisp and concise one-page story. It weaves together a high-level synthesis of four focused areas of investment across many themes, demonstrating common areas of overlap and encapsulating the holistic and interdependent nature of the work and our collective path forward.
2. **The Summary of Recommended Actions** spells out priorities. It calls out top actions from each of the focus areas and themes, drawing in greater detail including a main objective and a summary of how those actions will work and what the impact will be.
3. **The Appendix** is a deep dive. It contains each Community Working Group's full report across the seven themes, including a longer list of recommended actions in even greater detail. These reports are the quick and impressive work of individuals who volunteered a significant amount of time and professional expertise over a few short months. It represents their true, unedited work and serves as a resource to better understand the complexity of each issue and the robust thinking that sits behind the work.

While this focused action plan has been carefully crafted by many and vetted by four local government agencies, it's important to note that it is a living document, meant to be adapted to anticipate or respond to changing needs. This action plan is meant to be used not just as a reference point in navigating the aftermath of COVID, but as a pragmatic first step in building resilience and wellbeing into the distant future.

## Our Shared Values

Jefferson County, the City of Port Townsend, the Port of Port Townsend and Jefferson Public Utilities District #1 are unified as organizations in a commitment to our community through robust collaboration now and into the future. Collaboration is foundational to why we entered into this new interagency partnership, foundational to how we've worked together on this plan, and foundational to our sustained success as organizations and as a community. But what does collaboration mean to us? In its simple essence, our collaborative model can be defined by five main shared values:

**1. Vision**

We share a positive, lasting **vision** for a resilient, sustainable and equitable community. We believe that better times and better lives are possible for everyone if we work toward it together.

**2. Service**

We share a common drive and commitment to **service** to our community. We believe in and practice accountability to ourselves and to each other as we strive for a fairer and more equitable society.

**3. Courage**

We share an unflinching **courage**, galvanized by sustained energy and fearless determination in the face of adversity. We believe that challenges are better met with creative innovation and bold new thinking.

**4. Honesty**

We share a pledge toward **honesty** in our communications and actions with each other and with the wider community. We believe in respectfully acting and speaking truth in the face of challenge no matter what the difficulty.

**5. Agility**

We share boundless **agility** as situations unexpectedly and inevitably change. We believe in working with patience and calm to overcome challenges and to unlock new opportunities with open-mindedness and creativity.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This action plan would not have been possible without the generous support of our amazing community members whose talents, passion and dedication know no bounds. Those include members of six community working groups: 1) Culture & Events, 2) Economy & Jobs, 3) Children & Families, 4) Human Services, 5) Food System Resilience, and 6) Broadband. Individuals include:

Karen Affeld  
Arlene Alen  
Denise Banker  
Nathan Barnett  
Wendy Bart  
Annie Bartos  
Ben Bauermeister  
Trish Beathard  
Karen Bennett  
Larry Berger  
Rob Birman  
Leo Boyd  
Tom Brotherton  
Siobhan Canty  
Barb Carr  
Gabbie Caudill  
Dave Codier  
Elizabeth Court  
Cherish Cronmiller  
Frank DePalma  
Rick Dickinson  
Heather Dudley Nollette  
Pete Duncan  
Rich Durr  
Janette Force  
Kerry Hastings  
Daniel Heaton  
Rufina Garay  
Dina Geiszler

Belinda Graham  
Ian Hannah  
Jaci Hoyle  
Louise Huntingford  
Nat Jacob  
Diane Jones  
Maggie Kelley  
David King  
Beulah Kingsolver  
Crystie Kisler  
Kathleen Kler  
Cedar Knoll  
Anne Koomen  
Brian Kuh  
Pete Langley  
Laura Lewis  
Erika Lindholm  
Marki Lockhart  
Natalie Maitland  
Tina McCleese  
Carol McCreary  
Anna McEnery  
Tamara Meredith  
Ciela Meyer  
Lori Morris  
Amanda Milholland  
Danny Milholland  
Mari Mullen  
Gary Nelson

Kris Nelson  
Norm Norton  
Jim Novelli  
John Nowak  
David Olsen  
Cynthia Osterman  
Gage Pacifera  
Kelli Parcher  
Brian Richardson  
Catharine Robinson  
Claire Roney  
Kimber Rotchford  
Gary Rowe  
Jean Scarboro  
Celeste Schoenthaler  
David Seabrook  
Shelby Smith  
Deborah Stinson  
Dominic Svornich  
Tammy Tarsa  
Barb Trailer  
Teresa Varraes  
Jenny Vervynck  
Bob Wheeler  
Jerry Wilson  
Denise Winter  
Beau Young

All 16 elected officials representing the Intergovernmental Collaborative Group (ICG) – the four local jurisdictions of Jefferson County, the City of Port Townsend, the Port of Port Townsend, and Jefferson County Public Utility District #1 – spent many hours actively engaged in public meetings, reviewing plans and documents as well as participating actively in many of the community working groups. They include:

City Councilmember/Mayor Michelle Sandoval	County Commissioner Kate Dean
City Councilmember/Deputy Mayor David Faber	County Commissioner David Sullivan
City Councilmember Pam Adams	Port Commissioner/President Pete Hanke
City Councilmember Amy Howard	Port Commissioner Pam Petranek
City Councilmember Monica MickHager	Port Townsend Commissioner Bill Putney
City Councilmember Owen Rowe	PUD Commissioner/Chair Dan Toepper
City Councilmember Ariel Speser	PUD Commissioner Jeff Randall
County Commissioner/Chair Greg Brotherton	PUD Commissioner Kenneth Collins

The following staff members from the four local jurisdictions represented by the Intergovernmental Collaborative Group (ICG) and Intergovernmental Coordinating Committee (ICC) also contributed time and energy:

Eron Berg, Port of Port Townsend  
Patty Charnas, Jefferson County  
Wendy Davis, Port Townsend Police Department  
Carolyn Gallaway, Jefferson County  
Judson Haynes, Port Townsend Police Department  
Tony Hillman, City of Port Townsend  
Steve King, City of Port Townsend  
Apple Martine, Jefferson County Public Health  
John Mauro, City of Port Townsend  
Mark McCauley, Jefferson County  
Pinky Mingo, Jefferson County Public Health  
Nora Mitchell, City of Port Townsend  
Cliff Moore, WSU Jefferson County Extension  
Philip Morley, Jefferson County  
Will O'Donnell, Jefferson PUD  
Kevin Streett, Jefferson PUD

Finally, a gracious thank you to all those who contributed ideas, time and energy who are not mentioned here – and to those of you who are eager and willing to throw your strength and efforts to making this plan, its actions and a more resilient region come alive.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The COVID pandemic has created significant stresses, challenges and disruption to all of us across all sectors, and drawn many of our pre-COVID structural vulnerabilities to the surface only to exacerbate them. Before the pandemic, Jefferson County has struggled with chronic poverty, depression and suicide, lack of childcare, job stability, food insecurity, infrastructure provision including broadband, affordability and availability of quality housing – among other things. These have been amplified by underlying issues of systemic racism, inequity and injustice – and now further intensified by COVID, resulting in higher and/or wider prevalence of these issues with heightened acuteness, uncertainty and severity.

The pandemic has also galvanized a courageous and coordinated set of responses across our community, as individuals and organizations step up their commitment, creativity and leadership in taking on the fundamental challenges to our collective wellbeing and future. One such response is the development of this action plan. Developed over the course of a few short months, this plan was assembled by a new interagency collaboration, draws on a new partnership approach with the wider community, and was crafted under challenging new circumstances as a result of COVID restrictions and limitations. In short, it is a first bold step toward community recovery and resilience – but it is a living document, meant for heavy use so it can have maximum impact and frequent refinement so it can stay relevant in dynamic times.

The **community assessment** helps tell the story of where we were before the pandemic, a snapshot in time, helping to orient ourselves through the hazy uncertainty of COVID and toward the future we want. It will ensure that the steps we take are the right ones and that we're measuring progress and staying on track.

The core of this plan is a set of **recommended actions** developed and refined by community members, vetted by local government agencies and backed by all of us. Broadly defined, these actions are both short-term responses to the pandemic as well as a long-term investment in our future and collective wellbeing. Those investments include investments in physical infrastructure, building and maintaining the fundamentals of a robust local economy, a thriving and fair society, and a healthy natural environment. Those investments also include investments in social infrastructure, supporting strong human relationships and social cohesion to ensure we protect our most vulnerable and strengthen our local democratic system. They also help unlock our local economy to provide lasting prosperity for us all.

Other investments include investing in our ability to do this work together – adapting our institutions to become more collaborative and inclusive and to be ready for the challenges of the future. Finally, these investments include investment in strategic capacity and advocacy to ensure we take deliberate steps to learn more about complex issues and work together to advocate for our collective needs and vision.

Each of these four areas of focused investment range across many themes, demonstrate common areas of important overlap and encapsulate the interdependent nature of the work and our collective path forward. While integrated and important, these four areas of investment and actions aren't comprehensive or complete – they're meant as a bold starting point during a difficult time. As stated above, this is a living document that can evolve and change and one that needs our collective efforts to give it energy and make it come alive.

This report **concludes** with an assessment of **future opportunities**, anticipating future work and collaboration and sizing up additional challenges and opportunities. Finally, a set of **appendices** round out the full set of community working group recommendations and information on the formation and collaborative process of the Intergovernmental Collaborative Group (ICG).

## Investing in Our Physical Infrastructure

Action	Objective
<b>HYDRAULIC TRAILER</b>	Increase useable space within the Port by 20% to service more boats and grow the marine trades.
<b>ONSITE FOOD STORAGE AND POWER SUPPLY</b>	Enhance winter food production and storage of value-added goods for increased supply and emergency preparedness
<b>WIFI-HOTSPOTS, COMPUTERS AND INTERNET SERVICES</b>	Connect underserved families and students to education and services as part of the Connected Students Initiative
<b>AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND RELATED INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS</b>	Provide needed entry-level affordable rental units through new funding mechanisms.
<b>FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE PACKAGE</b>	Funding and delivery of regional infrastructure priorities to unlock our Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.
<b>A NEW CHILDCARE FACILITY TO SUPPORT WORKING FAMILIES</b>	Provide working families safe, nurturing and affordable childcare options to better serve, recruit and retain qualified employees in our regional workforce.

## Weaving the Social Fabric

Action	Objective
<b>DEVELOP A JEFFERSON COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PROJECT</b>	Address urgent mental health priorities through suicide prevention, trauma-informed care, and social support for key groups to mitigate stress and prevent mental health crises.
<b>LEVERAGE A COALITION TO BOLSTER YOUTH ENGAGEMENT, CONNECTION AND MENTORSHIP</b>	Reduce youth isolation and continue sustained skill development in social/emotional relationship-building.
<b>SUSTAIN A FAMILY RESOURCES NAVIGATOR TO SUPPORT CHILDREN AND FAMILIES</b>	Support children and families, link them to provided services, and advocate on their behalf to ensure access to resources and improved self-reliance and the ability to thrive.
<b>CREATE A START-UP FUND FOR COMMUNITY EVENTS</b>	Effectively bring back community events post-pandemic by ensuring sufficient and predictable funding for the planning and delivery of key programs and projects.
<b>OPEN AMERICAN LEGION SHELTER FULL-TIME AND PROVIDE WEEKEND MEALS</b>	Provide supportive emergency services to our most vulnerable populations.
<b>PROVIDE A COVID NAVIGATOR</b>	Proactively connect individuals to needed post-emergency services to ensure a greater chance of individual success and stability as well as reducing the burden on more reactive and expensive systems.
<b>PROVIDE UTILITY ASSISTANCE</b>	Provide direct assistance to households to avoid utility shut-offs.
<b>FACILITATE LINKAGES BETWEEN LOCAL FARMERS AND RESTAURANTS, SCHOOLS AND BUSINESSES</b>	Promote, incentivize and better understand opportunities to connect local producers and local demand.
<b>RESOURCE LOCAL FARM-BASED ENTERPRISES FOR GREATER SUCCESS</b>	Provide professional business expertise to the local farming community to successfully navigate and overcome business challenges.
<b>INVEST IN LOCAL CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURS</b>	Deliver tangible and sustained local economic benefits by bolstering the collective network, brand and platforms of local creative entrepreneurs.
<b>* FROM PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE: CREATE A NEW CHILDCARE FACILITY TO SUPPORT WORKING FAMILIES</b>	Provide working families safe, nurturing and affordable childcare options to better serve, recruit and retain qualified employees in our regional workforce.

## Designing Better Ways of Working Together

Action	Objective
<b>PARTNER, SUPPORT AND CLEARLY COMMUNICATE AROUND EVENT PERMITTING</b>	Ensure the smooth transition to resuming our robust community events scene by sharing information, providing flexibility and deepening collaboration and communication.
<b>DEEPEN COLLABORATIVE EVENT PLANNING AND MARKETING</b>	Deliver a coordinated, clear and compelling event marketing approach that drives community-wide event outcomes and maximizes investment from local resources.
<b>TARGET HOMEOWNERS WITH SPARE ROOMS/ADUs TO HELP ALLEVIATE THE CONSTRAINED SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE RENTAL UNITS</b>	Help local homeowners become landlords to increase the supply of affordable rental housing through a service center approach.
<b>* FROM WEAVING THE SOCIAL FABRIC: LEVERAGE A COALITION TO BOLSTER YOUTH ENGAGEMENT, CONNECTION AND MENTORSHIP</b>	Reduce youth isolation and continue sustained skill development in social/emotional relationship-building.

## Focusing Our Strategic Planning, Policy and Advocacy

Action	Objective
<b>COMPLETE BROADBAND PLANNING AND IMPLEMENT PILOT PROGRAMS</b>	Build on existing strategic and business planning efforts to better understand approaches to community-specific and county-wide broadband implementation.
<b>DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE SHARED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE CULTURE AND EVENTS SECTOR</b>	Leverage and nurture strong partnerships to prioritize shared investment needs and plan to deploy strategic shared use of new assets for the sector.
<b>COMPLETE AN ARTS AND CULTURE PLAN FOR JEFFERSON COUNTY</b>	Develop a year-round economy through employment and entrepreneurship in the creative industries.
<b>EXAMINE REGULATORY BARRIERS TO AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD ENTERPRISES</b>	Better understand and therefore reduce zoning, permitting and local health regulatory barriers to local processing of agricultural products.
<b>DEVELOP AND RESOURCE A REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEM RESILIENCE COMMISSION</b>	Focused strategic planning, policy-making and integrated coordination across multiple agencies and organizations that promotes and creates an equitable and sustainable food system.
<b>IMPROVE BROADBAND ACCESS TO UNDERSERVED RURAL COMMUNITIES</b>	Provide more direct control to local governments and special purpose districts to serve rural communities and individuals with improved access to broadband.
<b>CONSOLIDATE, ALIGN AND LEVERAGE A COORDINATED ADVOCACY AGENDA</b>	Deliver clear, simple, consistent and frequent asks to state and federal agencies for the wider benefit of our region.
<b>*COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PROJECT SUBCOMPONENT: DEVELOP A SUICIDE PREVENTION STRATEGY</b>	Better understand short- and long-term interventions for reducing suicide county-wide.
<b>*COMMUNITY EVENTS SUBCOMPONENT: ALLOW FLEXIBILITY IN RELIEF FUNDING AND/OR PROVIDE DIRECTLY TO CULTURE, ARTS AND EVENTS SECTOR</b>	Provide direct assistance to arts, culture and events organizations that have suffered great losses during the pandemic.

*Please note: The programs and projects listed above and in the Recommended Actions are general consensus priorities from the six community groups and the four governments. While some projects are immediately implementable, and have identified funding, others are still aspirational, and outside the capacity of local governments to fund. In those cases as we work with the state and federal governments, our four local governments and local non-profits will look for opportunities to bring in outside funding to advance the goals of this Plan.*

## COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

While COVID has upended our community, our local economy and society was not serving all our residents well before the pandemic. For instance<sup>1</sup>:

- A majority of **jobs** were in the service sector and offered little stability and opportunity for growth. Wages were lower than the state average and had stagnated since the 1990s.
- Approximately 15% of kids were living below the **poverty** line and school districts reported that 45-85% of students qualified for free and reduced lunch.
- **Childcare** had been in short supply for a long time, causing stresses for working parents, reduced income and/or substandard care for kids.
- **Infrastructure** had been neglected for decades and compounds problems like access to mobility, affordable housing and broadband.
- **Broadband** access was inconsistent, with only 59% of businesses surveyed in 2019 indicating they have broadband and 45% of residents reporting either no internet or only access at slow speeds.
- **Property values** were soaring often due to cash buyers from prosperous regions and retiree demand, pricing many locals out of **home ownership**. Higher than the State as a whole, house prices had been increasing by about 3% a year since 2001. The **housing affordability gap** – the additional income needed to afford a median priced home – increased over the last decade to about \$44,000 (2018 data). **Rentals** were difficult to find and require a disproportionately high percentage of income from renters.
- Access to **healthcare** was a broad concern across all age groups, with many traveling outside of Jefferson County for care or unable to afford care in the first place. Jefferson County has been designated a health care professional shortage area because of such high needs, particularly for mental health.
- **Behavioral health** – mental illness and substance use – was a significant health concern with barriers to treatment, issues of recidivism in the justice system, an uncommonly high prevalence of youth suicide, inter-generational trauma and racial inequities among related concerns.
- Despite local food production in the region, **food insecurity** meant about 13% of residents were food insecure – including 21% of children.

Unfortunately, these are not problems of the past. Trends require time to play out into clear pictures of where our community is at, and so do interventions that seek to influence or improve those trends. But one thing is clear: many if not all of those chronic issues listed above have been compounded and amplified by COVID, resulting in an acute severity of each issue and an increased urgency of response (see the Immediate Crisis Response section on page 23 for more about urgent response).

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<sup>1</sup> Data and findings from 2019 Jefferson County Community Health Assessment Report and Community Health Survey done by the Community Health Improvement Program (CHIP), a collaboration between Jefferson County Public Health and Jefferson Healthcare. See [www.behealthyjefferson.com](http://www.behealthyjefferson.com).

At a macro level, we can assume that the startling emerging trends playing out across the United States since the onset of the pandemic are also starting to play out locally, including<sup>2</sup>:

- **Job loss.** Of the 22 million jobs lost in March/April 2020, 12 million have returned, but there are still 10 million fewer jobs than the start of the pandemic – more than what was lost in the great recession of 2008/9.
- **House prices rising.** US home prices have risen 5.7% over the last year, reflecting the spending power of those with means and the challenges for those who can't afford the housing market and are increasingly priced out.
- **Service sector decline.** While consumer goods spending has increased 7.2% from January to September 2020, consumer spending on services has declined 6.1%. This reflects the fact that many people are unable to spend on restaurants, events and travel due to restrictions or closures but can spend instead on manufactured goods. Those service sector jobs represent 90% of those 10 million that have not been recovered.
- **Disproportionate impacts on women and people of color.** Service sector jobs – typically low wage – are disproportionately held by Black and Hispanic women. 5.5 million have lost their service sector jobs since the pandemic hit. This is compounded by the childcare crisis, falling more heavily on women, as women are less able to look for or accept work due to their more common role taking on childcare duties.
- **Potential for lasting damage.** Many of those impacts above combine to create a large number of long-term unemployed US workers, tripling since COVID and now at 3.6 million. Add to that the likelihood of unemployment benefits being lost *en masse* (current estimate is that 12 million will lose unemployment at the end of 2020), and the potential for lasting damage resulting in even greater evictions, foreclosures, long-term job loss, permanent business failures, hunger and mental health issues is alarming.

As we consider how best to move forward through both the acute impacts of the pandemic and chronic issues that lie underneath, an effort to measure the impacts of decisions and efforts is needed to ensure positive progress.

While this report does not propose specific metrics – it takes a good deal of time and collaborative efforts to agree the best measurements and to source the most accurate and appropriate data – it does signal that subsequent stages of intergovernmental and community collaboration on recovery and resilience should consider how best to align goals, objectives, targets and metrics on a reasonable and regular schedule.

To date, some of the best local efforts on this front are exhibited by the Community Health Improvement Program (CHIP), led by Jefferson County Public Health and Jefferson Healthcare. Integration of the CHIP approach into this wider work will be essential to sourcing the best available information and data, measuring what matters and working together on solutions to our most pressing problems.

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<sup>2</sup> Adapted from the New York Times/The Daily “The Pandemic Economy in 7 Numbers.” See: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/19/podcasts/the-daily/coronavirus-pandemic-us-economy-unemployment.html>

## SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Six community working groups identified Recommended Actions to address overwhelming needs and approaches to recovery and build resilience in the face of COVID. These Recommended Actions range from filling immediate, short-term needs such as utility assistance to long-term, stubborn, structural issues such as housing affordability.

These recommendations sit in their original proposed form as received by the groups in Appendix A. The agencies vetted the ideas, asked each group to refine the recommendations and worked with group representatives to identify top priorities. Collectively, these priorities comprise this abbreviated action plan.

The Intergovernmental Coordinating Committee (ICC), in their work to firm up a draft plan for review by the full Intergovernmental Collaborative Group (ICG), advised a more integrated approach to the original six categories given the overlap and synergies between groups. This synthesis is briefly described in the Executive Summary. Four new categories have emerged:

### **1. Investing in our Physical Infrastructure**

Investing in physical infrastructure is necessary to build and maintain the fundamentals of a healthy economy, society and natural environment. Capital projects can create and restore natural, physical and social capital and bolster prosperity far beyond COVID into the distant future. Delivering the list of physical infrastructure projects in this plan, while not exhaustive of our needs, is a start in how we collectively invest in infrastructure to recover and build resilience post-COVID.

### **2. Weaving the Social Fabric**

All communities, including ours, rely on social infrastructure, including networks of organizations and institutions that support health, human relationships and quality of life. Social infrastructure works to build social capital and cohesion, which acts as the glue for strong collaboration and proactive problem-solving. It also powers our local economy, long-term prosperity and ensures we build a fairer and more just society that takes care of all of us. Delivering the list of social infrastructure projects in this plan, while not exhaustive of our needs, is critical in rebuilding and strengthening social cohesion in our post-COVID recovery.

### **3. Designing Better Ways of Working Together**

While our institutions have stood the test of time and responded to many crises in the past, the world is changing and dynamic. Anticipating changes, innovating and redesigning ways of working together that are fit for the future can better serve our institutions and communities. This ICG community process is one such approach. The list of projects in this plan that design better ways of working together help build better capacity for positive change and push that philosophy forward in tangible ways.

### **4. Focused Strategic Planning, Policy and Advocacy**

While this plan is the result of months of collaboration and deep thinking, some areas need further examination. Projects in this section are meant to do that work and to assemble the necessary

structures and processes to get that deeper understanding of needed policy direction. Projects also include elements of collective advocacy to regional, state or federal agencies to further our recovery and resilience.

Many of the actions in this plan are already underway but will need additional capacity and support to continue. Some need champions to further develop and implement. Others will require years of collaboration, strategizing and fundraising in order to gain traction and make a meaningful difference. Regardless, the hope is that anyone reading this report can see themselves engaging in the important projects outlined here. Recovery and resilience will not be built solely by governments; instead, communities will need to work together to build a better future for Jefferson County. These projects are a starting point.

## Investing in Our Physical Infrastructure

### **HYDRAULIC TRAILER**

*Objective:* Increase useable space within the Port by 20% to service more boats and grow the marine trades.

*Summary:* A hydraulically-operated trailer will locate boats more closely together with the current marine lifts, significantly increasing usable shoreline hard stand space within Boat Haven at the Port of Port Townsend. More boats serviced means more work for marine trades businesses, an important component of our regional economy.

### **ONSITE FOOD STORAGE AND POWER SUPPLY**

*Objective:* Enhance winter food production and storage of value-added goods for increased supply and emergency preparedness

*Summary:* Mobilize winter food production models and store winter supply of dry and value-added goods for increased production and emergency preparedness, to include: provide on-farm cold and cool storage, dry-good and general storage with alternative power source, green/hoop houses to extend growing season, offsite emergency regional dry storage and commercial processing equipment. Also, provide Food Banks with generators or alternative power supply for existing cold storage.

### **WIFI-HOTSPOTS, COMPUTERS AND INTERNET SERVICES**

*Objective:* Connect underserved families and students to education and services as part of the Connected Students Initiative

*Summary:* The Connected Students Initiative has put computers, portable Wi-Fi hotspots and internet services into the hands of families with children in the free and reduced school lunch program. Widening this support will reach additional families and allow for better access to school, work and healthcare from home.

### **AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND RELATED INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS**

*Objective:* Provide needed entry-level affordable rental units through new funding mechanisms.

*Summary:* Jefferson County has an affordable housing crisis. High cost and limited inventory of both owned and rental units is resulting in substandard living situations and homelessness and the forcing of local workers to find housing in neighboring counties with compounding impacts on local economic development. Using mechanisms like SB 1590 and others to provide entry-level permanent affordable housing will reduce the significant burden on emergency and transition shelters and help individuals and families progress on the housing continuum with subsequent benefits to their own situation and that of our wider region.

### **FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE PACKAGE**

*Objective:* Funding and delivery of regional infrastructure priorities to unlock our Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

*Summary:* Local governments and other partners have consolidated near-term infrastructure priorities and the North Olympic Development Council (NODC) pulls those priorities into the 5-year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and submits them to the Economic Development Administration (EDA). The EDA requires grant funding to be consistent with the CEDS.



Jefferson County also uses the CEDS meet state eligibility criteria in awarding county Public Infrastructure Funds (PIF). An update to the project list was just completed by the four ICG partner jurisdictions. The list can also be used to advocate for our collective funding needs to other federal and state agencies.

**A NEW CHILDCARE FACILITY TO SUPPORT WORKING FAMILIES**

*Objective:* Provide working families safe, nurturing and affordable childcare options to better serve, recruit and retain qualified employees in our regional workforce.

*Summary:* Building on the planning funds received by existing partners from the State to develop new childcare programming, this effort will work toward the creation of at least one new childcare facility that accepts public assistance subsidy. Increased capacity of quality childcare will help recruit and retain employees, provide stability for parents and nurture healthier kids.

## Weaving the Social Fabric

### **DEVELOP A JEFFERSON COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PROJECT**

*Objective:* Address urgent mental health priorities through suicide prevention, trauma-informed care, and social support for key groups to mitigate stress and prevent mental health crises.

*Summary:* This multi-pronged program will include three main components: 1) suicide prevention, including the development of a suicide prevention strategy and community training in mental health first aid, 2) a trauma-informed approach, including a learning collaborative to help make trauma-informed care the norm for systems and services, and 3) social supports, including parent and youth support groups, and elderly and isolated community member connections.

### **LEVERAGE A COALITION TO BOLSTER YOUTH ENGAGEMENT, CONNECTION AND MENTORSHIP**

*Objective:* Reduce youth isolation and continue sustained skill development in social/emotional relationship-building.

*Summary:* A broad, community-based coalition of youth development organizations, sports & recreation providers, and individuals from diverse sectors will provide activities and programming for youth to engage with peers and adult mentors in order to reduce isolation and continue skill development in social/emotional relationship-building.

### **SUSTAIN A FAMILY RESOURCES NAVIGATOR TO SUPPORT CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

*Objective:* Support children and families, link them to provided services, and advocate on their behalf to ensure access to resources and improved self-reliance and the ability to thrive.

*Summary:* Community agencies and health care providers are often unaware of services that are available to support the families they serve. Knowing that early intervention is critical in the continuum of care for vulnerable families, finding a way to connect families to all available resources can enable them to move from “in crisis” to “vulnerable” and from “vulnerable” to “thriving.” The Family Resource Navigator will be responsible for developing an outcome-based, centralized approach to support children and families.

### **CREATE A START-UP FUND FOR COMMUNITY EVENTS**

*Objective:* Effectively bring back community events post-pandemic by ensuring sufficient and predictable funding for the planning and delivery of key programs and projects.

*Summary:* Long-standing community events have suffered alongside other sectors but generally lack the direct federal-level support and will likely be among the last to reopen after the pandemic. This long and unsupported impact has stretched or depleted reserves, so restoring depleted capital for projects and programs once Phase 4/reopening is possible will jump-start those community events. This, in turn, will generate positive and widespread social and economic outcomes for the region through restored and enhanced visitation, sales, and tax revenues beyond the direct benefits of the events themselves.

### **OPEN AMERICAN LEGION SHELTER FULL-TIME AND PROVIDE WEEKEND MEALS**

*Objective:* Provide supportive emergency services to our most vulnerable populations.

*Summary:* Most places where unsheltered people congregate during the day are currently closed or have limited capacity; keeping the shelter open 24/7 would provide the unsheltered population a place

to be during the day as well as accessible shower and laundry facilities to maintain personal hygiene. Adding weekend meals will help fill a gap left by the inability of providers to hold regular services to collect donations and sustain meal services.

### **PROVIDE A COVID NAVIGATOR**

*Objective:* Proactively connect individuals to needed post-emergency services to ensure a greater chance of individual success and stability as well as reducing the burden on more reactive and expensive systems.

*Summary:* Many residents struggle with complex and urgent mental, physical, and substance-related health needs, which have only grown more urgent in the COVID era. These individuals often interact with the criminal justice system and are disproportionately likely to have frequent contact with emergency services. A COVID Navigator employs a proactive and preventative approach to bridge the gap between emergency contact and ongoing care, reducing the burden on the justice and emergency service systems and/or reoffences and providing a more likely transition to stability and independence.

### **PROVIDE UTILITY ASSISTANCE**

*Objective:* Provide direct assistance to households to avoid utility shut-offs.

*Summary:* Household incomes are being negatively impacted by COVID and while shut-offs have been halted, community members are still accumulating past due accounts and will receive shut-off notices when the moratoriums expire. Vouchers for utility assistance are always paid directly to the utility providers on the customer's behalf. Beyond preventing shut-offs, direct utility assistance may help indirectly reduce overall household financial burden (mortgage, insurance, etc.) and challenges that some face in qualifying for assistance.

### **FACILITATE LINKAGES BETWEEN LOCAL FARMERS AND RESTAURANTS, SCHOOLS AND BUSINESSES**

*Objective:* Promote, incentivize and better understand opportunities to connect local producers and local demand.

*Summary:* Connecting local producers to local demand includes at least three mechanisms: 1) funding the annual Eat Local First Olympic Peninsula campaign to promote local food and its marketing campaign, 2) providing pandemic-responsive incentives and long-term incentives for regional stores to purchase regional food to support the revival and recovery of the agrarian economy and future local food supply, and 3) coalesce current research and identify additional topics and strategies to promote new linkages and distribution models as well as a comprehensive understanding of local food sources for aggregation of sales.

### **RESOURCE LOCAL FARM-BASED ENTERPRISES FOR GREATER SUCCESS**

*Objective:* Provide professional business expertise to the local farming community to successfully navigate and overcome business challenges.

*Summary:* A resource or position with technical, farm-based enterprise experience will help local farmers navigate changing business laws and facilitate the cooperative purchasing of inputs like seeds, supplies and packaging. Mitigating such challenges and locally sharing best practice can lift up our local agrarian capacity, productivity and the sector's overall sustained success.

## **INVEST IN LOCAL CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURS**

*Objective:* Deliver tangible and sustained local economic benefits by bolstering the collective network, brand and platforms of local creative entrepreneurs.

*Summary:* Building upon our strengths and creative identity can diversify our local economy and bring more sustained prosperity. Working together to connect, share and enhance what our creative entrepreneurs already have on offer can increase local production and sales, tourism draw, relocation of new creative talent, and viable training and employment pathways for local youth. This will be done through: 1) enhancing network connectivity through gatherings, apprenticeships, and shared information and knowledge, 2) developing sales platforms and support for shipping and delivery, 3) creating a brand and marketing program for local creative entrepreneurs.

## **\*CROSS-REFERENCED WITH INVESTING IN OUR PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE: CREATE A NEW CHILDCARE FACILITY TO SUPPORT WORKING FAMILIES**

*Objective:* Provide working families safe, nurturing and affordable childcare options to better serve, recruit and retain qualified employees in our regional workforce.

*Summary:* Building on the planning funds received by existing partners from the State to develop new childcare programming, this effort will work toward the creation of at least one new childcare facility that accepts public assistance subsidy. Increased capacity of quality childcare will help recruit and retain employees, provide stability for parents and nurture healthier kids.

## Designing Better Ways of Working Together

### **PARTNER, SUPPORT AND CLEARLY COMMUNICATE AROUND EVENT PERMITTING**

*Objective:* Ensure the smooth transition to resuming our robust community events scene by sharing information, providing flexibility and deepening collaboration and communication.

*Summary:* Anticipating a variety of ongoing changes to events requirements and guidelines as a result of COVID, better partnership between groups and with local agencies will help make the restart of events more seamless. This includes: 1) front-end engagement with government permitting departments in partnership with the sector to help understand state or federal requirements, 2) flexibility from permitting departments to help bolster and sustain events, and 3) deeper collaboration and communication through the permitting process as a shared knowledge base.

### **DEEPEN COLLABORATIVE EVENT PLANNING AND MARKETING**

*Objective:* Deliver a coordinated, clear and compelling event marketing approach that drives community-wide event outcomes and maximizes investment from local resources.

*Summary:* Creative solutions to co-market and stretch marketing and advertising dollars will continue to be important as budgets remain constrained during recovery. A shared approach will ensure the toolsets and skillsets are in place across a diversity of non-profit partners, that connections are strengthened with local government agencies, that efforts are streamlined and creatively optimize available funding, and that a clear and focused marketing approach/campaign emerges to drive increased event participation and the local social and economic benefits it provides.

### **TARGET HOMEOWNERS WITH SPARE ROOMS/ADUs TO HELP ALLEVIATE THE CONSTRAINED SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE RENTAL UNITS**

*Objective:* Help local homeowners become landlords to increase the supply of affordable rental housing through a service center approach.

*Summary:* While the region struggles with affordability and supply of housing, already-constructed units currently exist in the form of empty bedrooms and Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). Providing support, technical assistance and incentives for those rooms and units to be leased will provide some short-term relief to constrained supply.

### **\*CROSS-REFERENCED FROM WEAVING THE SOCIAL FABRIC:**

### **LEVERAGE A COALITION TO BOLSTER YOUTH ENGAGEMENT, CONNECTION AND MENTORSHIP**

*Objective:* Reduce youth isolation and continue sustained skill development in social/emotional relationship-building.

*Summary:* A broad, community-based coalition of youth development organizations, sports & recreation providers, and individuals from diverse sectors will provide activities and programming for youth to engage with peers and adult mentors in order to reduce isolation and continue skill development in social/ emotional relationship-building.

## Focusing Our Strategic Planning, Policy and Advocacy

### **COMPLETE BROADBAND PLANNING AND IMPLEMENT PILOT PROGRAMS**

*Objective:* Build on existing strategic and business planning efforts to better understand approaches to community-specific and county-wide broadband implementation.

*Summary:* Conduct business case studies and engineering design planning for the construction of expanded broadband infrastructure networks in Jefferson County. The study and planning will include options for the deployment of multiple technologies, such as fiber, wireless, cellular, or low-orbit satellite. Upon completion of the studies, a near-term list of targeted communities will be created for shovel ready pilot projects providing last-mile connections to end-users.

### **DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE SHARED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE CULTURE AND EVENTS SECTOR**

*Objective:* Leverage and nurture strong partnerships to prioritize shared investment needs and plan to deploy strategic shared use of new assets for the sector.

*Summary:* A comprehensive shared resource management plan aims to sync up shared resource needs and plan for deployment of shared assets. This shared economy approach will drive down costs for local non-profits to rent, own and/or manage individual items and thus focus more resources on delivery of core missions and community benefits. A plan for sharing resources and assets for cooperative use by the sector complements collaborative event planning and marketing and will help sustain the vibrant arts and culture experiences in our county.

### **COMPLETE AN ARTS AND CULTURE PLAN FOR JEFFERSON COUNTY**

*Objective:* Develop a year-round economy through employment and entrepreneurship in the creative industries.

*Summary:* An Arts and Culture Plan for Jefferson County leverages the recently formed Creative District in Port Townsend and initial planning work underway. This 3-5 year plan aims to help stabilize the region's overall year-round economy, providing both the vision and the concrete steps to get there, including drawing in an artist registry and needs across various creative groups, developing a plan for sustainable funding and providing a single source of information between artist and for audiences. The plan will be divided into the following five areas: literary, culinary, performing, makers and visual arts. This planning syncs closely with the comprehensive shared resource management plan and the deepen collaborative event planning and marketing actions.

### **EXAMINE REGULATORY BARRIERS TO AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD ENTERPRISES**

*Objective:* Better understand and therefore reduce zoning, permitting and local health regulatory barriers to local processing of agricultural products.

*Summary:* Supporting local farmers and farm-based enterprises by better understanding their regulatory constraints will help foster a positive local environment for food-based local businesses. This action syncs closely with the resource local farm-based enterprises action.

### **DEVELOP AND RESOURCE A REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEM RESILIENCE COMMISSION**

*Objective:* Focused strategic planning, policy-making and integrated coordination across multiple agencies and organizations that promotes and creates an equitable and sustainable food system.

*Summary:* A Food System Resilience Commission will create a powerful and unified strategic policy voice for our regional food system. Drawing on multiple agencies, organizations, businesses and groups from across the food system, it will prioritize policies and actions across a range of areas, including procurement, access and accessibility, production, processing, distribution, messaging and campaigns, education and land-use. A direct relationship with a supportive government agency or agencies will harness, validate and amplify the voice of the commission and the agencies for the collective aim of a more just, resilient and sustainable food system.

#### **IMPROVE BROADBAND ACCESS TO UNDERSERVED RURAL COMMUNITIES**

*Objective:* Provide more direct control to local governments and special purpose districts to serve rural communities and individuals with improved access to broadband.

*Summary:* Engagement with state and federal decision-makers and agencies is required to unlock local governments' and districts' abilities to serve rural communities with better broadband. Changes like allowing public agencies to serve as a retail internet service "provider of last resort," removing restrictions on broadband grant and loan programs and increasing funding for the construction of rural broadband infrastructure would allow us to serve our communities better.

#### **CONSOLIDATE, ALIGN AND LEVERAGE A COORDINATED ADVOCACY AGENDA**

*Objective:* Deliver clear, simple, consistent and frequent asks to state and federal agencies for the wider benefit of our region.

*Summary:* Drawing together and coordinating an advocacy agenda from our agencies and organizations amplifies the power and impact of our collective voices and will provide meaningful policy change and investment to our region.

#### **\*CROSS-REFERENCED FROM WEAVING THE SOCIAL FABRIC:**

##### **DEVELOP A JEFFERSON COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PROJECT – SUBCOMPONENT: DEVELOP A SUICIDE PREVENTION STRATEGY**

*Objective:* Better understand short- and long-term interventions for reducing suicide county-wide.

*Summary:* The development of a robust Suicide Prevention Strategy will be driven by a steering body of agencies, non-profits, clubs and groups to share objectives, avoid duplication and maximize resource utilization. With an emphasis on youth suicide, the Strategy will help identify the best interventions to reduce suicide county-wide.

#### **\*CROSS-REFERENCED: FROM WEAVING THE SOCIAL FABRIC:**

##### **CREATE A START-UP FUND FOR COMMUNITY EVENTS SUBCOMPONENT: ALLOW FLEXIBILITY IN RELIEF FUNDING AND/OR PROVIDE DIRECTLY TO CULTURE, ARTS AND EVENTS SECTOR**

*Objective:* Provide direct assistance to arts, culture and events organizations that have suffered great losses during the pandemic.

*Summary:* Long-standing community events have suffered alongside other sectors but generally lack the direct federal-level support and will likely be among the last to reopen after the pandemic. This long and unsupported impact has stretched or depleted reserves, so restoring depleted capital for projects and programs once Phase 4/reopening is possible will jump-start those community events. This, in turn, will generate positive and widespread social and economic outcomes for the region through restored and enhanced visitation, sales, and tax revenues beyond the direct benefits of the events themselves.

## IMMEDIATE CRISIS RESPONSE: CARES ACT FUNDING

As noted throughout this plan, COVID has exacerbated many underlying chronic issues. Community Working Groups and elected officials pivoted the work on this plan to size up a more immediate task that emerged from federal and state actions: locally-distributed CARES Act funding.

Jefferson County and the City of Port Townsend received state allocations of federal CARES Act funding and made a large portion of collective funds available for immediate actions developed by the same community working groups working on this plan. This additional assignment was done quickly and effectively, but necessarily so: the federal dollars needed to be spent very quickly (by November 2020) and very specifically (with a list of constraints) on COVID-related impacts.

The City of Port Townsend and Jefferson County agreed to pool resources for joint distribution. Both elected bodies voted to advance a range of project from the six community working groups, totalling over \$600,000 in allocation. The limited sum of money is not able to fully rectify the magnitude of impacts and difficulties faced by our region, but this emergency assistance is able to help mitigate them until further assistance is made available by state and federal governments or by other means.

Below is the list of projects funded by local CARES Act allocation. It is anticipated that the respective local bodies and the ICG will receive a report back on the implementation of each project once they are underway.



## CARES Act-funded Projects and Estimated Amounts

Project	TOTAL SCORE	Estimated Adjusted Amount	
Family Resources Navigator through the YMCA	15	\$ 55,000	
Additional funding for Jefferson Farmers Markets Association SNAP match program	15	\$ 25,000	
Household Utility Assistance	15	\$ 50,000	
Businesses Electric Utility Bill Assistance	15	\$ 40,000	
Childcare Support Funds through YMCA	14	\$ 31,500	
Financial support to NODC Olympic Peninsula Farmers Fund	14	\$ 25,000	
In coordination with Human Svcs food box proposal Create and distribute food boxes	14	\$ 10,000	
American Legion shelter staffing for 24hr operation through December	14	\$ 50,400	
Single daily meal for clients at Am. Legion thru Dec.	14	\$ 10,000	
Handwashing station/touchless hand sanitizers	14	\$ 5,952	
Proctor House Study Lounge with Jeff. Co. juvenile services	13	\$ 9,000	
Public restroom trailer	13	\$ 55,000	
Gathering Areas/Shelters Air Filtration	13	\$ 15,000	
Homeless Family Housing	13	\$ 30,000	
StrongerTowns Connected Student Initiative- Student connections spent thus far	13	\$ 10,518	
Stress Management and Emotional Resilience for Teens through the Benji Project	12	\$ 15,500	
Fall COVID Protection PR Campaign through DEM and JeffCoCares	12	\$ 7,000	
Youth tutor program creation, staffing at OlyCAP	11	\$ 9,000	
StrongerTowns Connected Student Initiative-connectivity to difficult to reach	11	\$ 8,400	
Case Management for Foster Care Volunteers through Olympic Angels	10	\$ 10,000	
COVID Navigator case management support in coordination with Human Svcs project	10	\$ 15,000	
Port of Port Townsend PPE	10	\$ 6,000	
Street-sized Outdoor tent for outdoor dining & business gatherings	10	\$ 40,000	
Outdoor heating units for Street Tent	10	\$ 23,650	
Air filter system for Key City	8	\$ 15,000	
Repurpose Chimacum School District Multipurpose Room for community meal prep	7	\$ 10,000	
<b>Grants to Culture and Events Organizations</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>\$ 60,000</b>	<b>Scalable as needed, up to \$60,000</b>
<b>PUD Countywide Hotspots existing and future</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>\$ 190,000</b>	<b>Scalable as needed, up to \$190,000</b>
<b>COVID Testing Contract w JeffHealthCare</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>TBD</b>	
<b>Reimburse COVID charity through OlyCAP</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>TBD</b>	
<b>Cost of Selected Proposals</b>		<b>\$ 831,920</b>	
<b>County &amp; Max Potential City Funding</b>		<b>\$ 777,665</b>	
<b>Reductions In Proposal Amounts Needed</b>		<b>\$ (54,255)</b>	
<b>County Commissioner Motion as adopted:</b>			
Motion to authorize staff to pursue and execute subrecipient agreements on the listed projects, subject to adjusting amounts based on time of eligibility, updated information from the subrecipients/beneficiaries, city funding available, not to exceed the dollars available and revising scalable projects as appropriate (PUD and Culture & Events Grants)			

## CONCLUSION AND FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

No one would have wished for this crisis, but it has brought together our community like never before. Agencies, organizations, business, groups, and individuals have stepped up to collaborate and contribute energy and ideas and, in doing so, have deepened our collective investment into a shared vision for the future and a shared process for getting there. This plan doesn't get us fully to that vision, but it does give us confidence that we can take the first essential steps together in the same direction.

It also means that there is much work to be done – not just to bring the actions in this plan to life, but to work together on where we want to focus our efforts next. These future opportunities are broad and not fully explored. That said, a few key themes to those future opportunities have come through, including:

1. **Dissemination of this action plan.** As stated in the purpose section on page 5, there are four main purposes of this document: to communicate a common vision about what recovery looks like in the coming months, to build capacity for collaboration, to signal unified priorities to other levels of government, and to reshape how we work as agencies in collaboration with the community we serve.

Actively leaning on this plan to those ends requires conversations with state and federal leaders and agencies, local and regional businesses and organizations, and individual members of the community. Coordinating these efforts through shared organizational structures and communications channels will help reinforce our unified strength and voice. It also means recognizing those who put their energy, ideas and time into this effort, and working with them to speak to and disseminate the plan.

2. **Alignment and advancement of advocacy efforts.** While it is a key pillar of this action plan (*Focusing Our Strategic Planning, Policy and Advocacy*, page 21), there's a wider opportunity to work closer as agencies and broaden our collaborative efforts. This can take shape in the near term for this 2021 Washington State legislative session through the emerging North Olympic Legislative Alliance (NOLA) effort with Clallam County that is being driven by the four ICG local governments and Team Jefferson EDC. Moreover this can take shape in the longer term as agencies and institutions plan out and align policy efforts, collaboratively identify and explore funding mechanisms and better coordinate priorities and timing.
3. **Wider community engagement and communication.** Aside from the dozens of individuals who stepped forward to contribute to this effort (see acknowledgements on page 6), others have been involved by attending ICG and ICC meetings, participating in online or radio conversations about the recovery efforts and initiating conversations among their organizations and neighborhoods (for example, through the Engage PT Ambassador Program). Greater and more visible engagement is not only possible but desirable in harnessing the community-driven ethos of this work. It is also essential to diversifying the voices, amplifying voices that may be ignored or unheard, and ensuring our full community is represented in the implementation of this plan and subsequent next steps.

These opportunities will likely open up when COVID restrictions on gatherings are lifted. Taking advantage of the latent desire to connect by planning community discussions, guest lectures from international experts (for instance, the Michael Shuman online lecture hosted by the ICG in October 2020), blue-skies thinking “co-laboratories” and other creative approaches will give implementation a boost and fulfil one of the purposes of this plan – to reengage with a broader representation of the community in new and meaningful ways. More engagement builds our collective capacity to recover and build resilience faster and with greater success for all.

4. **Quick wins from early implementation.** Momentum builds momentum. Focusing on early actions and galvanizing quick wins will help build capacity to take on greater challenges. Reporting back on the immediate crisis response of coordinated and community-driven CARES Act funding allocation is an important accountability milestone in communicating how our early efforts are making a positive difference, what we learned and where we may need to readjust into the future. This can be done at both the Jefferson County Board of County Commissioners and Port Townsend City Council, as CARES Act funding recipients, as well as to the full Intergovernmental Collaborative Group (ICG).
5. **Recalibration of ICG focus.** With the main task of the ICG complete at the completion of this report, there is an opportunity to reconsider the scope and focus of this new interagency partnership. Based on preliminary discussions of both the ICC and ICG, it is likely that the agencies will be sizing up how they can continue working together, possibly turning their collective focus from immediate and acute recovery concerns to tackling more chronic and complex issues.
6. **Exploration and refinement of additional actions.** Many of the community working groups identified additional actions that were not prioritized but may have merit for further refinement and implementation (see Appendix A, starting on page 28). Other actions may be viable for further extension beyond their initial time frame. These actions include things like:
  - Working in closer partnership with groups like the Housing Solutions Network to bring forward creative solutions to housing availability and affordability and to help communicate and navigate through often complex systems and processes.
  - Deploying tested models like the Community Land Trust model locally to reduce the land-component cost of housing by holding the land and offering long-term leases to homeowners.
  - Continuing build-out of a more accessible and affordable broadband infrastructure.
  - Further investing in shared community infrastructure and resources, including across culture and events organizations and the business community as well as further deployment of alternative models to ownership and operations of those investments.
  - Stabilizing key institutions like the Fort Worden Public Development Authority and associated partner organizations which represent our region’s unique identity and bring lasting value to residents and visitors alike.

This action plan is not meant to stifle those efforts but to focus and prioritize what we can all do with limited time and resources. Community working groups or others are encouraged to

continue refining and adding ideas and actions as time and resources allow and as our situation continues to evolve.

7. **Further examination and coalescing the intersectionality of actions.** All of the community working groups identified areas of intersection between their work and other groups as well as further connections to the broader community that were not possible to fully explore during the limited time to produce this plan. Diving deeper into these connections – for instance, how workforce housing and childcare influence mental health, learning, productivity, or public safety and how efforts may impact issues of equity – will allow us to bridge current gaps in how we work together and to generate solutions that have a multiplier effect and bring forward more lasting change.

As stated at the outset, this community-generated plan is the beginning of our recovery from COVID and the beginning of a new era of community-led interagency collaboration. Drawing on shared values and the realization that we all depend on each other, this plan is meant to be wind behind our sails for sustained success as organizations and as a community. Thank you for reading this plan and committing to finding your role and making it come alive. A brighter future is possible if we believe in it and act on it together.

## APPENDIX A: COMPLETE COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

The following full Community Working Group reports are included in this Appendix:

- Culture & Events
- Economy & Jobs
- Children & Families
- Human Services
- Food System Resilience
- Broadband

## **Culture & Events Community Working Group**

**Lead Section Community Group:** Culture, Arts and Events

**Supporting/Overlapping Sectors:** Economy & Business

**Community Group Members:** Michelle Sandoval, Wendy Davis, Natalie Maitland, Amanda Milholland, Barb Trailer, Janette Force, Denise Winter, Nathan Barnett, Dominic Svornich, Mari Mullen, Rob Birman, Belinda Graham, Teresa Verraes, Tina McCleese, Lori Morris, Danny Milholland

**Background:** The COVID-19 Pandemic has hit the Culture, Arts and Events Sector especially hard due to mandated closures with no estimated date for when in-person group activities will resume. Pre-pandemic economic impacts of this sector are reflected in these statistics: In Washington State, Arts and Culture supports over 167,000 jobs and contributes \$44.3 billion to the state's economy; locally, Jefferson County ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> in WA State's Creative Vitality Index, indicating a high percentage of arts and culture workers contributing greatly to our community. Over the past few months, members of the convening work group represented this sector of Jefferson County with organizations as far ranging as The All County Picnic and South County's Shrimp Fest to the Rhododendron Festival and Jefferson County Fair to Wooden Boat and Port Townsend Film Festivals to performing arts organizations like Key City Public Theatre and Centrum for the Arts who together produce numerous performances, education programs and festivals each year. The group discussed current and future needs that speak to increasing collaboration, ensuring the health and safety of our community, creating solutions for event opportunities, and financial impacts.

**Problem/Opportunity Statements:** The Culture, Arts and Events group accepts the array of challenges that the pandemic presents to the various events our community treasures and is looking to both short- and long-term opportunities to survive. Many of our area's events are in jeopardy and all face uphill battles in regaining financial footing during the recovery process. With an emphasis on group collaboration and creating safe event spaces and practices, the group hopes to be prepared for the time when events and gatherings can once again resume. The group has made it our priority to work together to identify what needs will strengthen and benefit all of the organizations and events represented through this task force - our artists and employees, in addition to the hotels, restaurants, shops and businesses who are positively impacted by our work. The group has identified the increased burden that will be placed upon them when producing an event by first needing to create gathering spaces that meet COVID-19 guidelines and protocols. Subsequent discussions centered on an opportunity to invest in community infrastructure to collectively ease the financial impact of the pandemic on the ability to safely re-emerge. From co-marketing to shared resources the group sees an opportunity with support from governance to once again share art and culture event experiences with our community.

**Summary of Recommendations:** The key area the group determined centered on creating outdoor performance/event venue spaces. As restrictions ease on group gatherings, initially outdoors will be the safest location for events to take place. Creation of these spaces extends a shared opportunity to our business community to also utilize the outdoor venue space infrastructure. Investing now represents a long-term opportunity for shared resources which will ensure the arts, culture and events sector remains fiscally responsible in their event production while meeting guidelines for safe gatherings so that they can emerge safely, while recovering financially from the impacts of the pandemic. Additionally, the group's recommendation included shoring up the safety of an indoor performance space to be used

for recording and live streaming by individual artists and arts, culture and events groups until live performance is allowed.

**Recommended Actions:** The group presented for CARES Act funding equipment purchases for subsequent uses that in the immediate future (Nov 28, 2020 – Jan 3, 2021) will serve downtown restaurants, businesses, uptown market, arts/culture groups and individuals in non-traditional ways. This new infrastructure will transition to use by our county's for- and non-profit arts, culture, events and individual artists for gatherings and performances, when allowed, in order to safely re-establish events during the COVID-19 era and well into the future.

- The funded items to create outdoor safe spaces include, 2 – 40x40 tents, public restroom trailer, hand washing / touchless hand sanitizer stations, and commercial patio heaters, will be put into use immediately at two pre-identified locations: one in downtown Port Townsend to create a fully tent covered outdoor eatery space; a second tent placed uptown Port Townsend both as outdoor eatery for restaurants in that district as well as in support of the Port Townsend Farmer's Market. The breakdown of infrastructure investment includes:
  - \$40,000 for two tents
  - \$55,000 for public restroom trailer
  - \$5592 for hand washing / touchless hand sanitizer stations
  - \$23,680 for commercial patio heaters

Note: Operational costs of set up, security and managing of equipment by The Production Alliance is to be paid by an alternative funding source. (a formal agreement is being drafted)

- In addition, funding in the amount of \$15,000 was designated for the installation of UV viral air filtration in Key City Playhouse, which will result in the ability for various user groups to create online streamed events (with no audience present) beginning November 2020, by providing safe air handling required by COVID-19 industry guidelines. The playhouse will be available for various user groups looking to create streamed/recorded events in a controlled space with professional lighting and sound capabilities. Once allowed under state mandate, the installation of UV viral air filtration in Key City Playhouse will prove essential for this venue to safely re-open to the public for use by numerous arts, culture and events partners. Key City Public Theatre manages the venue and has secured additional funding for other COVID-19 mandated improvements needed to safely operate the playhouse facility.

Once our sector is in full operation, all of the above infrastructure investments will transition to traditional arts, culture and event uses. However, they will continue to support businesses deeply impacted by the pandemic; hotels, restaurants and shops will benefit from the economic ripple effect of returning events/ performances - significantly bolstering county sales tax revenue that has been diminished by the pandemic.

- Outside of the sector's infrastructure requests, \$60,000 was set aside to be made available through a grant application process for culture and events organizations in Jefferson County. These funds will provide immediate and critical operational support (rent, utilities, payroll expenses) to entities that suffered significant revenue losses due to mandated closures and event cancellations (Mar – Oct, 2020).

In order to restore the Culture, Arts, and Events Sector, the public will need to be confident that events will take place in our performing arts venues that meet health department approval and have established operational parameters that any organization, when using them, can easily follow. This proposal reflects the Jefferson County Culture, Arts, and Events sector's comprehensive plan to work

together safely in bringing this essential part of our economy back into operation so that we may significantly improve our residents' quality of life. Thank you for helping the Culture, Arts, and Events Sector survive COVID-19 so that we may help Jefferson County's economy get back on its feet.

### **The Future:**

As a group we determined the following are five priorities for the group and officials to continue to address as recovery and resiliency efforts for the Culture and Events sector in 2021.

1. As we move forward in uncertain times, the group identified a need for support and clear communication from Health Department and City/County Event Permitting to understand the changes that could affect the event planning process once events are allowed to resume. The group anticipates a variety of changes that are likely to result from the pandemic - from changes in vendor requirements to the sanitation services required. that might result from the pandemic and clear guidelines for holding large group gatherings once that opportunity is permitted. Recommended actions include:
  - Front-end engagement with government permitting departments in partnership with the Culture, Arts, Events Sector to help interpret/understand state requirements and provide guidance for new event protocols.
  - Flexibility from government permitting departments to help bolster and sustain events by: waiving or reducing fees; allowing fees to be carried forward in the event of reversals in re-opening phases that result in mandated cancellations; speed in processing permits as re-opening announcements may provide shortened planning windows.
  - Deeper collaboration through the permitting process – a shared knowledge base both among the sector's groups/organizations as well as between government permitting departments and event sector groups; access to previous permits to determine what was recommended and what was denied will benefit smaller groups with less capacity to do individual research.
  
2. The group looks to continue collaboration amongst sector organizations in planning, marketing and development of alternative solutions. Creative solutions to co-market and stretch marketing and advertising dollars will continue to be important as budgets continue to remain constrained during recovery. Opportunities to develop or support projects that simplify the event marketing messages and to work with government agencies to help with the marketing effort were also discussed. In addition, collaborative fundraisers, improved process for data gathering and development of a shared arts and culture plan for the county. Recommended actions include:
  - Identify non-profit partners that may have the tools in place to lead in a co-operative marketing effort such as Fort Worden PDA, The Co-Lab, The Port Townsend Creative District, Port Townsend Main Street Program.
  - Deepen connections and build a collective event marketing campaign with government agencies such as the Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce and City and County LTAC. This may include a collective kit/sharing economy investments. Effort should be placed on strong communication between all parties to avoid duplicative efforts and maximize the stretch of our limited budgets.



- Build a strong relationship between City of Port Townsend and Jefferson County Lodging Tax Advisory Committees and make it a funding priority for both LTACs to develop and execute a clear collaborative marketing message for the Culture, Arts and Events sector.
  - In support of the request by the Economy and Jobs Sector, prioritize funding the strategic planning process for the Port Townsend Creative District. The greatest guide for sector collaboration will be an Arts and Culture Plan for Jefferson County. The newly formed Creative District is fundamental to our sector. Investment in time and funding to flesh out the District's strategic plan will pay back in huge dividends to the stability of the County's overall year-round economy. This comprehensive 3 to 5-year plan provides not just visioning but concrete steps.
3. As we go forth the group looks to develop a comprehensive plan for shared resource management, a concept this has blossomed out of this funding request. The purchase of new assets for cooperative use by the sector, has set in motion the creation of a plan that will help sustain the vibrant arts and culture experiences in our county. Recommended actions include:
    - Complete a long-term business plan with The Production Alliance, to maintain and operate newly acquired infrastructure assets funded by CARES Act. Coordinate equitable use by all non-profit, government, and for-profit Culture, Arts, and Events sector partners.
    - Develop a strategic plan for continued collaborative investment in current and future infrastructure needs to support the sector, leading to a potential permanent location for an outdoor stage/venue(s) and an indoor performing arts center. Possible investment by City and/or County LTAC, dependent upon location(s), and local government support for an application to WA State's biennial Building for the Arts Grant (next funding in 2022).
  4. Reaching across sectors, our group identified Broadband as another area that will prove vital for members of the Culture, Arts and Events Sector. Events are increasingly going virtual and indicators show that once in-person events/performances resume, the virtual piece is not going away. What we have learned in the pandemic is that by necessity events have gone virtual and it has revealed a segment of our county's population who had not previously been served by sector events due to a multitude of barriers including transportation, cost, and health. Ensuring that our community has access to high speed internet to access cultural offerings is essential to reaching underserved County residents. Recommended actions:
    - Continued commitment and investment on the part of Jefferson County to ensure broadband across the county.
    - New investments by sector partners in technology and infrastructure upgrades that will facility the ability to present virtual events in the short-term and hybrid live events with a virtual component in the future.
    - Within the sector, share access to technology and venues to build capacity for individual artists and organizations to expand event streaming opportunities.
  5. The group further identified the need for financial resources for many of our county's long-standing events which will continue to be pressed as the pandemic stretches well into 2021. This sector is slated to be the last to re- open, however, it has had minimal funding opportunities

during the pandemic as most relief funds are necessarily directed to essential services. Unlike other sectors, it is not enough to simply survive until re-opening is allowed. Most events, performances and activities for this sector require several months to a year for preparation before launch. With severely stretched reserves many organizations will lack start-up capital for projects and programs once Phase 4 is reached, and by that time, relief funding will likely be depleted or deemed no longer necessary. Recommended actions include:

- In-kind support from government and private entities that partner with non-profit events group in the form of waived fees for facility use or co-operative marketing for activities that bring them shared value.
- Identify an entity to create a “Start-Up Capital Fund” for community events. Work with Jefferson Community Foundation to either host the fund or identify another partner.
- Local government agencies lobby the State and/or Federal government to allow more flexibility in relief funding or to create provisions for setting aside relief funds for use by non-profit and for-profit Culture, Arts and Events businesses to use within a timeline that is in sync with their allowed re-opening.

## Economy & Jobs Community Working Group

**Lead Section Community Group:** Economy & Jobs

**Supporting/Overlapping Sectors:** Broadband, Children & Families

**Community Group Members:** Jeff Randall, Brian Kuh, Arlene Alen, Deborah Stinson, Kris Nelson, David King, Elizabeth Court, Pinky Mingo, Siobhan Canty, Pete Langley, Dina Geiszler, Erika Lindholm, Will O'Donnell, Rick Dicinson, Kerry Hastings

### **Summary of Recommendations:**

Jefferson County's economy and job situation has been under stress for decades. Lack of affordable workforce housing, affordable childcare, affordable and available high-speed broadband affect the ability of Jefferson County businesses to attract and retain the workforce needed for their success. Jefferson County residents are dedicated to this place, creative and entrepreneurial. However, these same issues make it difficult to afford to live, work, and thrive here.

*This Chapter proposes initiatives that are intended to build on our strengths by addressing these issues in the short term while setting the stage for longer term improvement.*

### **Problem/Opportunity Statements:**

**Opportunity statement:** We should look at the COVID crisis as an opportunity to seek positive change in our economy and in our community.

- The COVID situation creates opportunities to look for new ways to conduct business where location and distance are not an issue and may be in fact a new normal.
- We should strive to sustain and strengthen the existing economy while recognizing that our environment is evolving (COVID) and seek to diversify our economy to make it more resilient. We need to build on successful parts of our economy (tourism, maritime trades, construction, agriculture and the arts) for a more diversified resilient local economy. We should engage the whole community to get everyone working together to identify and find solutions to community problems such as affordable workforce housing and childcare.

- I. **Problem statement:** We need to identify the factors that have prevented us from achieving a **diverse resilient economy** and work on these problems as part of our long-term economic development strategy.
  - a. Lack of **affordable workforce housing, childcare, and lack of high-speed broadband county-wide** are barriers to achieving a diverse resilient economy. These issues affect Jefferson County residents who are seeking work locally as well as the businesses who seek to employ them. Our County was facing a crisis on all these fronts prior to COVID and this pandemic is making it much worse.
  - b. Provide a **framework for recruiting** new businesses and residents who will contribute to achieving a diverse resilient economy.

- c. We need to support **growth of existing businesses and creative entrepreneurs that complement and evolves successful aspects of our economy (tourism, marine trades, public sectors, arts and agriculture)**. Match existing **craft-driven culture and scale** in Jefferson County.
  - i. **High speed broadband** is needed for new and existing businesses that will become increasingly reliant on internet sales as well as reliable communication and data exchanges.
- d. Recognize that **our geography isolates our local economy** that in some ways provides advantages and in some ways disadvantages.
  - i. We need to ensure greater resiliency and protection from **global market interruptions and fluctuations in tourism**.
  - ii. We need to promote the production, sale, and purchase **of local products and services** as part of a resilient diverse local economy.
  - iii. The **Gig economy** is expected to grow, technology now allows these and other workers to come to Jefferson County to work remotely.
  - iv. We need to seek to **further diversify our economy by attracting businesses that aren't impacted by transportation distances and delays**.  
Examples—software development, arts (literary, music, film), etc. We should capitalize on our existing creative entrepreneurs and expand them into enterprises that would provide livable wages.
- e. We need to find ways to support and **market** this new **diverse resilient economy**.
  - i. Ensure that Jefferson County is known as a place where small- to medium-sized businesses can thrive.
  - ii. Avoid worsening our affordable housing problem through this active promotion of our community.
- II. We need to **engage all the sectors of our economy** in a way that everyone realizes the interconnectedness of the sectors, with each of us as individuals (engaging all of our residents), and that the problems we face (such as workforce housing, child care, etc.) are not siloed problems that affect only some of us, or only some sectors of the economy.
- III. We need to connect existing networks including arts, makers, maritime, food & agriculture, finance, education, housing, etc.
- IV. We are all in this together, recognize the interconnectedness of our economy and other support.

**Background:**

The issues raised in this chapter are not new. As a rural county with very outstanding natural features and a well-known tourist destination, Jefferson County has long been attractive as a place to retire. While our retirees are generous with their time, expertise and financial resources, they are not reliant on making a living in Jefferson County. This report is focused on the businesses and workforce that Jefferson County needs to be a well-rounded and resilient community. Current trends are making

Jefferson County less affordable for local workers. The COVID crisis is accelerating these trends in many ways. If we wish Jefferson County to be composed of real communities, where the businesses are locally owned and the workforce is housed and lives locally, then immediate steps must be taken to address the affordability of workforce housing, the availability of affordable childcare, the provision of additional financial and technical assistance to businesses, increase the economic activity in the marine trades sector which provides some of the best living wage jobs in the County, and provide affordable and available high speed broad band to every home and business in Jefferson County.

**Recommended Actions:**

**PROJECT/INITIATIVE 1: Increase available affordable workforce housing**

**OBJECTIVES & DESIRED OUTCOMES**

- Secure more affordable workforce rental units within existing residences as quickly as possible

**OBJECTIVES & DESIRED OUTCOMES**

- Secure more affordable workforce rental units within existing residences as quickly as possible
  - Problem statement – “The most critical business issue in Jefferson County is workforce housing, it permeates every sector of our community every day. The challenge is not just about finding people places to live or helping more housing be built, it is finding units that we can turn into housing in the short-term to help bring the long-term development gap to closure.” Arlene Alen, Executive Director – The Chamber of Jefferson County (See addendum)
- OBJECTIVE - Increase available housing that is affordable for our workforce in the near term through a centralized housing “service center” – currently being called “Housing Connections”
  - Provide bridge until larger scale multi-family units can be built
  - Provide a minimum of 25 more affordable rentals per year, serving households of 1-3 people
- DESIRED OUTCOMES:
  - Keep our local businesses viable by keeping existing workers here and ensuring future workers can come to our community
  - Provide resident and community stability through the provision of affordable and safe homes that people can live in for extended periods
  - Provide extra income for those struggling to keep their homes through a new rental income stream
  - Provide financial and personal care options for growing number of those seeking to age in place - to avoid health and social isolation risks of congregate living

**PROPOSED LEAD ORGANIZATION & SUPPORTING ROLES**

- LEAD: Housing Solutions Network (HSN)
  - Currently an initiative of Jefferson Community Foundation (JCF)

- Challenge/Opportunity Statement: <https://housingsolutionsnetwork.org/what-makes-housing-affordable/>
- Wide range of unique out-of-the-box efforts to address the challenge: <https://housingsolutionsnetwork.org/housing-action-teams/>
- Emerging vision: Housing Connections - An Affordable Housing Service Center – serving both tenant and landlords
  - See Figure 1 Housing Connections proposal below
- SUPPORT: City and County – Development Services
  - Provide support through funding and/or partner with Housing Connections Project Manager with a Permitting Concierge
- SUPPORT: Peninsula Housing Authority, Habitat for Humanity, OlyCAP, Bayside, Dove House, Homeward Bound
  - Continue partnership with HSN and Housing Connections to coordinate services and resources
- SUPPORT: Business community memberships
  - Allow businesses to help fund this service that is made available to their employees or potential employees

**ACTION STEPS and TIMEFRAME**

- Action Teams continue current plans and conduct Pilot Projects for small-unit construction (Oct 2020 – ongoing)
  - Provide input to Housing Connections development
  - Provide success stories
- Identify the minimal viable product – lean process to find starting point (Fall-Winter 2020)
- Further define the specifics for each Housing Connections component (Fall-Winter 2020)
  - Deliverables, tasks, skills, staffing, partnerships
- Identify and implement Housing Connections’ appropriate business structure (501c3, etc.) (Winter- Spring 2021)
  - Only needed if/when this growing initiative exceeds the capacity for HSN/JCF to host
- Identify potential funding mechanisms (Winter – Spring 2021)
  - City/County – expedite planning & execution (2021 CARES funds)
  - Grants (some already in the pipeline)
  - Fees for services – sliding scale
  - Consultation services for other communities (longer term)
- Launch Housing Connections (Spring – Summer 2021)
  - Hire staff and/or recruit volunteers
  - Develop marketing materials and begin County-wide promotion
  - Soft launch while still under COVID-19 restrictions/limitations
  - Full launch ready once restrictions/limitations lessened or lifted

**ASSESSMENT:** Tangible, Fundable, Legal, Able to Implement, Address COVID-19

- Project meets these guidelines based on findings from a solid year of work conducted by various Housing Action Teams

- Tangible: Substantial interest level demonstrated through focus groups, offered trainings, project proposals – all with limited advertising (e.g. 80+ people attended HSN’s free How to be a Good Landlord training)
- Fundable: One or two paid staff, initially grant funded and later through sliding scale fees, memberships and consulting fees
- Legal: No barriers discovered to date
- Able to Implement: Demonstrated success in other communities and our own local community response indicate viable approach  
<https://housingsolutionsnetwork.org/rural-models-that-work/>
- Addresses COVID-19 due to the increased pressure on housing, both by anticipated rental evictions and demonstrated increased demand for housing by those moving here to work remotely

**LEGISLATION/ADVOCACY** required at State, Federal or Local levels

- Anticipate occasional review and adjustment for local permitting to create units that cannot meet existing regulations

**ADDRESS LONG-STANDING ISSUES**

- Lack of affordable housing has been identified as a barrier to economic and community health for well over a decade. The problem has grown in recent years and this pandemic is escalating the issue to crisis levels.
- This proposal was developed by coordinating with existing housing entities, resulting in a project that is unique and complimentary to current housing programs.

**FUTURE WORK and ACTIONS** to address longer-term Community Needs by this or similar/enhanced group in 2021

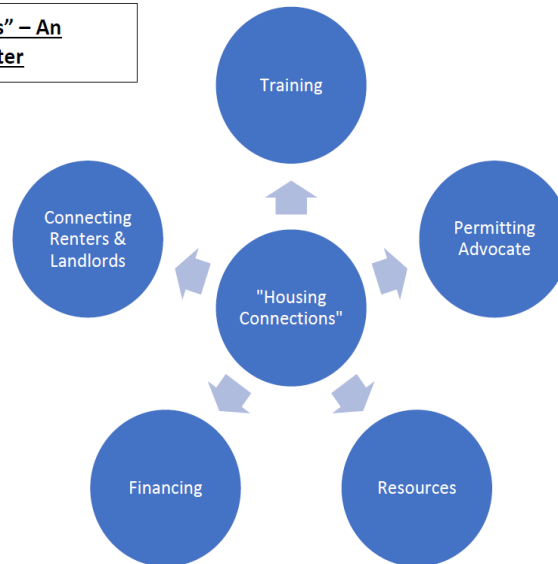
- *None in addition to Action Steps and Timeframe (see above)*

**PRIORITY PROJECTS/USES** for any Future Federal Funding in 2021

- \$50,000 to oversee the planning and execution but not to fund the ongoing staffing (Project Manager, Permit Navigator, etc).
- Ideally, City & County each fund 25-50% FTE ongoing for the Permit Navigator position. Minimally, City & County dedicate 25% in-house FTE to Permit Concierge until such time that the role is no longer needed.

**Figure #1:**

**Vision for "Housing Connections" – An Affordable Housing Service Center**



**Training** = This would include information on any upcoming trainings, such as the Rental Connections’ “How to Be a Good Landlord” training, Tiny Home Community trainings, as well as trainings provided by other NGOs.

**Permitting Advocate** = This is a resource that many have called for, which would be a person who can individually walk someone through the permitting process. Could be a subsidized fee-for-service effort where a local contractor visits the site, application support, etc. Could be eligible for public funding.

**Resources** = Information on topics such as tiny homes, local builders, a check list for permitting process, etc.

**Financing** = A possible funding mechanism through the Neighborly Rentals HAT.

**Connecting Renters and Landlords** = A way to “match” renters and landlords. Could outsource to an existing resource like [silvernest.com](http://silvernest.com) (focused on home-sharing with older adults).

### **Addendum**

#### **Problem Statement:**

The most critical business issue in Jefferson County is workforce housing, it permeates every sector of our community every day.

Our economy cannot thrive without people to staff our businesses and they need a place to live and to recreate. Recreation abounds in Jefferson County, a community imbued with history, culture and outdoor experiences that provide a fabulous quality of life and a great desire to participate.

Businesses with open positions, whether current staffing or growth roles, may have skilled needs not found in our current local job pool. There are generally many qualified candidates from outside Jefferson County who would be ready, willing, and able to relocate, at their own expense, to take on a given job opportunity. Unfortunately, even if they could find housing, there are few jobs with salaries that can support over \$2000 per month for a small ADU, at best.

Businesses are forced to hire geographically. They need to fill a role in their operation and must hire the best person who lives in Jefferson County to fill the position. That person may be far from the best qualified and may/may not rise to the occasion. If they do not, that business has lost opportunity, they have exhausted funding resources and now may have to separate someone from a job they cannot do and again go through the same process, often with the same repetitive negative result.



Business attraction is virtually impossible without housing for a workforce that meets the scale and scope of the operation. Here, almost no housing is available and what little there is does not approach what prospective employees/residents might be willing or able to habit.

The challenge is not just about finding people places to live or helping more housing be built, it is finding units that we can turn into housing in the short-term to help bring the long-term development gap to closure. Without this, all the long-range planning and diversification efforts of so many people in the community, including our nonprofits' and city and county government efforts, will not be enough to provide us with a sustainable model for the future.

Arlene Alen, CPM, IOM

Executive Director

The Chamber of Jefferson County

### **PROJECT/INITIATIVE #2: Jefferson County Business Survey**

#### **OBJECTIVES & DESIRED OUTCOMES**

Quantitative measure of COVID impact to Jefferson County businesses.

#### **IDENTIFICATION OF LEAD & SUPPORTING ROLES**

EDC Team Jefferson, with support from the Chamber of Jefferson County, Center for Inclusive Entrepreneurship, PT Main Street Assoc., PT Marine Trades Assoc., North Hood Canal Chamber of Commerce, and others.

#### **PROPOSED ACTION STEPS:**

1. Develop a brief online survey that solicits revenue and employment data from businesses who have been impacted by COVID. Include questions to identify business sector, and longevity of operations.
2. In collaboration with supporting agencies, distribute link to survey broadly to businesses throughout Jefferson County, including the south and west ends. Consider using unique URL to link directly to the survey. Outreach via email lists, publication in agency newsletters, press releases for local media, and sponsored social media posts.
3. After 60 days, compile results of survey and present to Economy & Jobs Committee for subsequent ICC review. Use survey to inform future CARES or similar funding allocations. Provide survey results to WA Dept. of Commerce for statewide assessment.

### **PROJECT/INITIATIVE 3: Initiative Recommendation: Investing in Local Creative Entrepreneurs**

**DESCRIPTION:** Mitigate the impacts of the pandemic on our local economy by connecting, supporting and marketing a subset of our business community: our large, existing local creative entrepreneurs – unique makers and service providers whose products can be purchased and delivered virtually.

To achieve this, we propose to build a network of organizations that will:

1. Identify local creative entrepreneurs and connect them with each other regularly to share resources and support.
2. Identify communion obstacles, opportunities and gaps to inform programming.
3. Create a County-wide brand for Jefferson County as a home of creative entrepreneurs, partnering with the work of the Creative District team.

4. Create an online portal to facilitate increased sales locally and nationally
5. Create and launch local and national marketing programs
6. Mobilize a network of pro-bono experts (primarily local retirees) to work side-by side with creative entrepreneurs as they navigate their growth.
7. Connect youth job training opportunities – scholarships, apprenticeships, etc. – to future careers as creative entrepreneurs and business owners.

**OBJECTIVES & DESIRED OUTCOMES**

1. Objectives
  - a. Strengthen our existing community of local creative entrepreneurs that are not dependent on physical space or visitors.
  - b. Strengthen our local economy by adding to a diverse range of development strategies that are local and sustainable.
  - c. Increase sales of local creative entrepreneurs from online markets outside of Jefferson County and make it easier for part- and full-time residents of Jefferson County to source their purchases locally.
  - d. Attract new creative entrepreneurs to relocate here.
  - e. Increase tourism by attracting high-end shoppers and visiting creative entrepreneurs.
  - f. Create new training and employment pathways for local youth.
  
2. Outcome:
  - a. Create a master list of unique, craft-driven makers and service providers in Jefferson County whose products can be purchased and delivered virtually.
  - b. Host a series of monthly virtual gatherings to facilitate networking and the sharing of knowledge that relates specifically to craft-driven makers.
  - c. Develop sales platforms and support for shipping and delivery.
  - d. Create a brand for Jefferson County as a home to creative entrepreneurs.
  - e. Connect existing makers and services providers to a network of like-minded business leaders and experienced volunteers
  - f. Hold a retreat to identify the greatest obstacles and opportunities they face in order to inform the development of the Business Service Hub (A separate proposal being submitted)

**SUGGESTED LEAD & SUPPORTING ROLES**

Proposed Network Lead/Admin: Jefferson Community Foundation

Potential Network Members:

Marketing: Chamber of Commerce, Creative District

Business Resources & Ed: Economic Develop Council, Northwind Art, Ft Worden

CE Financing: Port of Port Townsend, LION, Craft3

**PROPOSED ACTION STEPS, TIMEFRAME, FUNDING NEEDS**

ACTION	TIME FRAME	FUNDING	NOTES
Create a Master list of Creative Entrepreneurs	First draft complete in 4 weeks	Staff only	See Support Staff line below
Hold Monthly Gatherings and Needs Assessment Sessions	Ongoing	\$1,200	Zoom & incidental costs

Establish a website that lists and links to local creative entrepreneurs who have goods or services sold via the internet.	3 months	\$7,500	Web Development
Establishment of a brand for Jefferson County businesses (“Maker County” or “Buy Quimper”) Develop and implement a two-pronged marketing program, one for local audience, one for national.	3 months for design. Ongoing campaign.	\$35,000 - \$150,000	Contract Professional Marketing Firm. Cost here is dependent on parameters of contract and appetite for risk
Establish a data management and matching systems for pro bono experts and apprentices	3 months	\$1,200/yr	Probably off the shelf.
Recruit and match pro bono experts	Ongoing	Staff only	
Facilitate apprenticeships	Ongoing	Staff only	
Overall Staffing	Ongoing	\$80,000/yr	1 FT leader at \$55,000 1 PT support at \$25,000
TOTAL FUNDING		Min \$125,000 Max \$240,000	

#### ASSESSMENT

- This is highly tangible, fundable, and able to be implemented. The legal issue that needs to be researched are those related to volunteering and youth engagement. This strengthens and helps sustain a large existing community of local creative entrepreneurs at a time when our traditional driver of economy – tourism – is weakened by the pandemic.

#### NEEDED LEGISLATION/ADVOCACY

- None needed.

## PROJECT/INITIATIVE 4 - Enhancement of Jefferson County Business Resource Center

### **a. OBJECTIVES & DESIRED OUTCOMES:**

- i. **Objectives:** Provide seed funding for a project management position that
  1. Manages and maintains a network of programmatic, third party, and volunteer resources for which the Jefferson BRC acts as a “concierge service” of sorts.
  2. Works to support other community-driven “target industry” initiatives (such as Marine Trades, Creative entrepreneurs, Main Street, etc ) by seeking to identify and facilitate coordination of programming and resources in support of these target industries.
  3. Develops diversified funding streams (program fees, corporate sponsorship, grants, in-kind service) to support ongoing program and project management/concierge services.
  4. Develops multi-channel small business certification programs in conjunction with existing educational components of EDC Team Jefferson & The Chamber of Jefferson County plus integrating educational offerings of partner agencies within this program.
  5. Migrate Chambers Entrepreneurial Expo 2020 (postponed for COVID) to this merged platform to provide an ongoing educational, marketing and resource platform for small business as well as a path to future engagement and funding resources.
- ii. **Outcome:** Jefferson County Business Resource Center becomes
  1. Building on the City and Counties plan for the BRC at inception to become more robust to handle the increasing demand for services and support that existing businesses will need to survive the COVID-related economic downturn and likely slow recovery.
  2. A critical resource to supplement any future CARES funding directed to small businesses since grant funds will never be “all that a business needs” to survive.
  3. A sustainable resource that community driven targeted economic development efforts can access to support the initiatives over the long term.
  4. A symbol of the broader community’s support of small businesses making East Jefferson County an attractive location for entrepreneurs to grow roots.

### **b. IDENTIFICATION OF LEAD & SUPPORTING ROLES**

- i. LEAD entities: EDC Team Jefferson and The Chamber of Jefferson County
- ii. SUPPORTING ROLES:
  1. Jefferson Community Foundation
  2. Port Townsend Main Street program

3. Center for Inclusive Entrepreneurship
4. Washington Small Business Development Center
5. LION
6. Craft3
7. PT Marine Trades
8. Skillmation
9. Jefferson County School Districts
10. Peninsula College (Internship/apprentice programs)
11. WA State Microenterprise Association

**c. PROPOSED ACTION STEPS & TIMING & FUNDING NEEDS:**

<b>STEPS (not necessarily in order)</b>	<b>TIME FRAME</b>	<b>FUNDING NEED</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Update inventory of existing local, regional and national resources (both \$\$ and technical) for which JeffCo businesses are eligible.	Q4 2020	\$0	staff/volunteer time has an associated expense, but step considered essential regardless of supplemental funding accessed.
Create job description for part-to-3/4-time project manager for the “BRC Project Manager” (or other name)	Q4 2020	\$0	The first-year scope of the job description should include the preparation of a BRC sustainability plan
Hire a BRC Project Manager	Q1 2021	\$75k	Est \$65k salary plus benefits

**ASSESSMENT**

- Tangible,
- Fundable,
- Legal,
- Able to Implement, Address COVID-19

Project meets these guidelines based on findings from a solid year of \$100,000 operation including planning and execution as well as funding of part-time position, web and digital media creation/marketing resources, and management. Goal would be to be self-sustaining beyond year 1 of operation and continue leveraging the resources of The Chamber of Jefferson County and EDC Team Jefferson.

BRC, Business Resource Center, while there is a physical footprint, is a concept, not a location and thus can function virtually as well as integrating with some physical space as time and circumstances necessitate.

**NEEDED LEGISLATION/ADVOCACY**

N/A

**THE FUTURE**

## PROJECT/INITIATIVE 5: Creative District - Complete Professional Arts and Culture Study

OBJECTIVES & DESIRED OUTCOMES: Develop a year-round economy through employment and entrepreneurship in the creative industries, divided into the following 5 sectors: Literary, Culinary, Performing, Makers, and Visual arts. Goals of the study include:

- Creating an artist registry and determining the needs of each sector;
- Developing a plan for sustainable funding;
- Developing a single source for information between artists and for audiences;
- Developing a comprehensive Arts and Culture plan for our community which will lay out a road map on best ways to proceed. Formal boundaries for the creative district are currently defined as uptown commercial, downtown commercial, and Ft. Worden PDA, as was necessary to obtain initial State of WA grant funds to narrow the scope of the project. **However it is important to note the Creative District promotion of creative industries would apply to all of east Jefferson County.**

LEAD & SUPPORTING ROLES: Port Townsend was designated by Arts/WA at the beginning of 2020 as a creative district along with 8 other statewide communities. The creative district is currently under the Port Townsend Main Street umbrella and is run by a group of 7 diverse community individuals with a larger committee of 20 partners, artists, and community leaders supporting them.

PROPOSED ACTION STEPS: Hire a consultant to complete the study to more quickly and decisively make an impact in strengthening and growing our creative economy. Two consultants do this work in Washington State. Based upon interviews with these consultants and a review of their work, the estimated cost to complete the plan would be \$15,000-\$17,000. This project is already underway but needs funding to be completed. During these challenging economic times impacted by COVID-19, we need to use all the creativity and tools we have to weather this storm and emerge stronger. Study goals would be to connect audiences with artists and unify our strategic efforts to grow these sectors of our County's economy. Implementation steps would include enhancing the flow through the Creative District with marketing, signage, imaginative way-finding and transportation strategies. Additional goals include supporting work-live housing strategies for artists and partnering with schools to develop options for young adults wanting to stay in the area and work in the creative industries.

### ***4 PART TEST: TANGIBLE, FUNDABLE, LEGAL AND ABLE TO BE IMPLEMENTED THAT ADDRESS RECOVERY IN THIS SECTOR; IDENTIFY HOW EACH PROJECT MEETS THE ESTABLISHED FOUR PART TEST***

Tangible: Fully vetted project by over 20 community partners and State sponsor

Fundable: One-time cost (15-17k) to develop plan similar to those already successfully executed in other communities

Legal: State sponsored initiative

Lobby: Already complete

COVID: Small entrepreneurial businesses in our creative industries are some of the most at-risk post COVID yet provide some of the most potential grow and strengthen our local economy.

**PROJECT/INITIATIVE 6 – Support Jefferson County marine trades – Purchase a hydraulically operated trailer to increase capacity of haul out facilities.**

Objectives and Desired Outcome: Purchase of a hydraulically operated trailer that can locate boats more closely together than is possible with the marine lifts in current use. Result will be a 20% increase in useable shoreline hard stand space within the Port. More boats serviced is more work for marine trades businesses.

IDENTIFICATION OF LEAD AND SUPPORTING ROLES: Port of Port Townsend

PROPOSED ACTION STEPS: Will require funding of approximately \$300,000.

Long Standing Issues – Primary objective is to provide more work for marine tradespeople by increasing the size of the yard by 20% which allows for more work to be scheduled in Port Townsend. Also, optimizes use of Port upland property and increases Port revenue as more boats are placed on Port property.

Legal/Legislation required - Approval by Port Commission.

The Future – This will encourage the construction and use of buildings and other enclosures as the trailer does not require the width and height of a marine lift. Moving more of the work inside will help the Port and marine trades businesses comply with environmental regulations. The technology required is well understood as trailers of this kind are used in the Northeast where most boats are hauled out every year to avoid ice in the winter (SeaMarine operates a smaller one in Port Townsend and larger versions are in use in Anacortes).

***4 PART TEST: TANGIBLE, FUNDABLE, LEGAL AND ABLE TO BE IMPLEMENTED THAT ADDRESS RECOVERY IN THIS SECTOR; IDENTIFY HOW EACH PROJECT MEETS THE ESTABLISHED FOUR PART TEST***

Tangible = the project is defined in scope and cost.

Fundable = the Port has the capacity to match grant funding for this proposal; grant funding opportunities have not yet been identified.

Legal = the port is authorized to own and operate equipment to serve its boat yard.

Recovery = active work yard space is what allows marine trades to go to work every day. Adding 20% capacity to the yard, increases available potential work by the same. Growing the marine trades adds community resiliency to a significant sector of Jefferson County's economy.

**PROJECT/INITIATIVE 8 - Commercial lease relief (rent, utilities, taxes). Support local businesses through temporary rent reduction (idea based on Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance CECRA program).**

OBJECTIVES & DESIRED OUTCOMES – Temporary support of businesses who are struggling to pay rent. Shared burden between local government, state, and landlord to subsidize/reduce rents payed by businesses for a temporary period.

IDENTIFICATION OF LEAD & SUPPORTING ROLES: TBA

PROPOSED ACTION STEPS

- Reaching out to commercial landlords, is there any meaningful subsidy that can, subsidy for commercial rents. Possibly combine with assistance from state or local governments?
- Main Street sent letters to landlords asking if they could reduce, defer rent. Some of them did, a bulk of them did not. Some gave deferrals.
- In Canada, state gave a break, landlords gave a break, Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA) for small businesses provides **relief** for small businesses experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19
- This idea that we are all in this together

***4 PART TEST: TANGIBLE, FUNDABLE, LEGAL AND ABLE TO BE IMPLEMENTED THAT ADDRESS RECOVERY IN THIS SECTOR; IDENTIFY HOW EACH PROJECT MEETS THE ESTABLISHED FOUR PART TEST***



## Children & Families Community Working Group

**SUPPORTING/OVERLAPPING SECTOR(S):** Human Services, Jobs & Economy, Broadband, Food Systems:

- *support Broadband efforts, Connected Students*
- *Food distribution is critical for families: Food Systems group*
- *Consistent community messaging: human services group*

**COMMUNITY GROUP MEMBERS:**

Kate Dean, Cherish Cronmiller, Barb Carr, Tamara Meredith, Larry Berger, Denise Banker, Anne Koomen, Wendy Bart, Beulah Kingsolver, Anna McEnery, Trish Beathard, Jean Scarboro, Dave Codier, Jenny Vervynck, Natalie Maitland, Cynthia Osterman, Ian Hannah, Apple Martine, Kelli Parcher, Ciela Meyer,

**PROBLEM/OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT:**

Covid has placed enormous stressors on families. These include (but are not limited to):

- food and housing insecurity,
- isolation,
- poverty/ joblessness/ insufficient wages,
- increase in depression/ anxiety/ suicidal ideation,
- physical health impacts- delaying medical procedures, substance use, decrease in activity,
- lack of childcare,
- mixed messages about Covid,
- uncertainty in schooling
- instability within governmental institutions
- increase in domestic violence and less reporting to Child Protective Services,

In response to these, the Children and Families Community Group seeks to ***activate our communities***, which are known for stepping up and creatively meeting the needs of our kids, to:

- break down silos within our organizations;
- make resources easier to access, especially for families that are most challenging to reach;
- find new ways to fill gaps in services.

The Community Group has identified near-term, implementable goals for 2020-2021, and recognizes that poverty, insecure housing, and behavioral health are fundamental problems that must be addressed strategically to improve long-term outcomes.

**BACKGROUND :**

When COVID hit in March of 2020, families in Jefferson County were already suffering from a local economy that did not serve them well. Economic data indicates that a majority of jobs here are in the service sector, which offers little stability and opportunity for growth. Wages here were already lower than the state average and had stagnated since the 1990's. 15% of kids were living below the poverty line, and school districts reported that 45-85% of their students qualified for free and reduced lunch. Property values were soaring due to cash buyers from prosperous regions and retiree demand, which priced many locals out from buying homes. Rentals were difficult to find and require a disproportionately high percentage of working people's income in order to cover.

All of this was true 7 months ago, and COVID has only made it more devastating for families. Service industries such as tourism, restaurants and entertainment- all large employers of family-aged workers-

have been hard hit by layoffs. Real estate prices continue to climb. Kids have been out of school to varying degrees, requiring parents to be home to supervise them. These impacts to families have resulted, predictably, in stressors that are impacting mental and physical health and safety. Domestic violence calls to law enforcement are up. Calls to the crisis line have increased. And Jefferson Healthcare had 4 teen suicide attempts come through their doors in a two week period, one to completion.

The Children and Families Community Group has grappled with these impacts since July and identified near-term Recommended Actions, outlined below, that our communities and organizations can focus on to mitigate impacts to children and families as we move into the winter and look ahead to 2021, the hopeful arrival of a vaccine, and economic recovery.

But we also recognize that given the economic realities of families prior to COVID, Jefferson County as a whole needs to be addressing long-term, structural flaws that make this an exceptionally difficult place to achieve the security needed to nurture healthy families. We implore the community to take a new approach to housing, services for families and teen mental health, in particular, to make this a sustainable home for people of all ages.

## **SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS :**

### **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

#### **1. PROVIDING FOOD TO FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN (0-5, PRESCHOOL)**

##### **• Objectives & Desired Outcomes**

- Food insecurities of families with young children will be resolved or relieved.
- Provide nutritious food to young children throughout the week, throughout the year.

##### **• Proposed Lead Organization & Supporting Roles**

- School District liaisons from each district, Backpack programs, Olycap?, YMCA?

##### **• Action Steps & Timeframe**

- Step 1 – learn about current funding for meal programs so funding and service are coordinated and maximized.
  - On Friday, October 9, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) released a press release and multiple waivers to allow sponsors to operate Summer Meal Programs through June 30, 2021.
  - The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, in coordination with USDA, will release additional information as it becomes available.
  - This guidance also allows schools and afterschool care centers, regardless of their location, to serve at-risk, afterschool meals and snacks to students after the regular school day, through June 30, 2021.
  - The target age is 0-18. Meals can be funded on weekends and over holidays
- Step 2 – Contact local organizations (school districts, YMCA, etc.) to determine what services are currently being provided with this funding.
- Step 3 – Evaluate gaps in service or needs for support for existing services
- Step 4 – Fill food and service gaps to be sure all young children have adequate nutrition.

- Assessment: Show that it is Tangible, Fundable, Legal, Able to be implemented, and Addresses Recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - Legal programs are in place. USDA & OSPI are providing funding.
  - Gap analysis is important.
  - Providing this service would be a great opportunity to coordinate with existing service organizations to provide high quality support to families.
- Does it also help address long-standing issues?
  - Food insecurities are a well-documented concern in our county. This topic is discussed at meetings of Community Health Improvement Plan groups, Jefferson County Public Health, Jefferson Healthcare, and other groups.
  - COVID-19 has caused loss of employment and has increased this need.
- Describe any Legislation/Advocacy needed for this at the State, Federal or Local levels.
  - Coordination is needed with OSPI.
  - Lobby for continued funding from USDA

**2. FAMILY RESOURCES CENTER, “CENTRAL HUB”, ACCESS TO RESOURCES, INCLUDING PARENTAL SUPPORT AND EDUCATION FOR STRESS REDUCTION/ MITIGATION:**

***OBJECTIVES & DESIRED OUTCOMES***

The Family Resource Center would provide a central location which can become the hub, the nest, the safe place, for meeting the many immediate needs of our vulnerable families, and at the same time be a place of support and guidance for accessing the services of organizations and agencies in our midst. The outcome of this project would be families who are better supported in navigating the difficult landscape of finding and accessing resources in the County.

***PROPOSED LEAD ORGANIZATION & SUPPORTING ROLES***

A lead organization would need to be identified for this action, one with capacity and experience in providing services collaboratively. All other agencies and local organizations who serve the needs of families would provide supporting roles, i.e., food banks, YMCA, schools, Jefferson Healthcare, Jefferson County Public Health, Dove House, etc.

***ACTION STEPS & TIME FRAME***

- Establish lead organization who will work with others to develop a strategic plan for this project – First Quarter 2021
- Develop strategic plan – First Quarter 2021
- Obtain use of a facility/ site– First Quarter 2021
- Develop project budget and identify funding sources – Second Quarter 2021
- Create project timeline for implementation – Second Quarter 2021
- Develop center partners to implement the strategic plan – Third Quarter 2021
- Build out property for partner use – Fourth Quarter 2021 & First Quarter 2022

- Celebrate the Family Resources Center opening – First Quarter 2022

First Quarter 2021	Second Quarter 2021	Third Quarter 2021	Fourth Quarter 2021	First Quarter 2022
Establish lead organization who will work with others to develop a strategic plan for this project	Develop project budget and identify funding sources	Develop center partners to implement the strategic plan	Build out property for partner use	Build out property for partner use
Develop strategic plan	Create project timeline for implementation			Celebrate the Family Resources Center opening
Obtain facility/ site				

**ASSESSMENT**

This project is tangible because it is a physical presence in our community providing tangible resources for family.

This project is fundable because of the potential for grants and additional Covid relief funding, if available.

This project is legal – many communities have something similar already.

This project is able to be implemented because it includes currently existing services, agencies and organizations in partnership.

This project addresses not only the short term needs of families effected by losses of family resources due to COVID-19, but it addresses the long established needs and challenges of families in Jefferson County by providing a more accessible way of obtaining services in support of family needs.

Legislation and advocacy would be needed in obtaining the use of a publicly-owned facility. State and Federal advocacy would be needed for obtaining funding.

**3. Mental Health: The Community Resilience Project**

The isolation, economic hardship, and disruption to daily routines of the COVID-19 pandemic have had significant negative impact on mental health in Jefferson County. While true for all ages, the effects are especially acute among children and families and notably adolescents.

Mostly alarmingly, the community in September experienced the suicide of a 13-year-old as well as three more unsuccessful attempts. Teachers and others who work with young people report high levels of stress, anxiety, and depression in county teens, who already experienced levels of suicidal ideation, suicide attempts, and depressive emotions that were much higher than Washington State averages.

Parents, young children, and other age groups are also suffering the effects of prolonged stress. Nationally, one-quarter of the population is experiencing symptoms of depression, triple the number before the pandemic.<sup>3</sup> Suicide rates among adults are also rising. The Children and Families Work Group explored interventions to address mental health needs across the age and risk continuum. Several initiatives with refined project plans and lead organizations were recommended for funding and are outlined elsewhere in this report. The task force recommends further action to develop a **Jefferson County Community Resilience Project**. This would be a multi-pronged program to address urgent mental health priorities through suicide prevention, trauma-informed care, and social support for key groups, including parents, to mitigate stress and prevent mental health crises.

A **steering body** would bring all agencies, non-profits, clubs, and groups working in these areas into alignment, so they share unified objectives, avoid duplication, and maximize resources.

- Suicide Prevention
  - **Development of a robust county-wide suicide prevention strategy** with emphasis on youth suicide including identification of short- and long-term interventions.
  - **Community training in Mental Health First Aid** to reduce stigma, increase recognition of warning signs, and learn how to respond to someone who is struggling, making this knowledge as common as CPR so community members including teachers, business owners, faith leaders, and parents can act as a first line of action. This is especially critical in rural areas with a shortage of mental health professionals. [Details on the program](#), costs, and how it works.
- Trauma-Informed Approach
  - **County-wide learning collaborative** so trauma-informed care becomes the norm for systems and services throughout the community. TIC understands the pervasiveness of trauma, recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in individuals (including self), and responds by actively seeking to support recovery and avoid re-traumatizing people who come in contact with the service, organization, workplace, etc. See more information on [trauma-informed communities](#).
- Social Supports
  - **Parent and Youth support groups** through a community hub such as YMCA to increase peer-to-peer connection, alleviate stress, and improve connection to resources.
    - Work more closely with Empowered Teens Coalitions to utilize resources available through HCA/DBHR funding
    - Seek additional funding partnerships through CHIP, BHC, OCH, 1/10, etc.
  - **Elderly and isolated community member connections**
    - Using emergency management neighborhood groups, create a framework for check-ins that connect volunteers by phone or distanced in-person contact with individuals who are isolated by virtue of age, disability, or mental health status.
    - Train mail carriers to be alert for signs of potential problems (mail not picked up, lack of activity, strange activity, etc.) and teach them recommended follow-up actions.

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<sup>3</sup> Ettman CK, Abdalla SM, Cohen GH, Sampson L, Vivier PM, Galea S. Prevalence of Depression Symptoms in US Adults Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *JAMA Netw Open*. 2020;3(9):e2019686. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2020.19686

- Recruit Local 2020 to develop other initiatives to provide social supports for people whose normal supports such as church, library, clubs are not active due to COVID, such as care boxes, pen pals, etc.
- Work more closely with O3A and OlyCAP to increase community-building programming for independent elderly.

#### **4. COMMUNITY-WIDE YOUTH ENGAGEMENT, CONNECTION AND MENTORSHIP**

##### **Objectives:**

- To provide structured activities for youth to engage with peers and adult mentors in order to reduce isolation and continue skill development in social/ emotional relationship-building, as well as stimulating or furthering interests in enrichment activities.
- To create safe environments for interaction and enjoyment, consistent with COVID protocols, which benefit mental health.

##### **Roles:**

- Project lead – identify organization or individual to coordinate an effort to provide recreational and enrichment activities.
- Project Committee – Create action plan to coordinate activities and outreach, provide safety guidance for participating groups.
- Ad hoc individuals and organizations – organize and host activities

##### **Actions & Timing:**

1. Identify psychosocial needs fulfilled by traditional/past social activities ( week 1-4)
  - a. Teen milestone or rite of passage activities (dances, athletic events, prom etc)
  - b. Common teen and childhood group activities (in and out of school)
  - c. Adult group activities: choirs, dancing, dating, etc.
2. Brainstorm COVID compliant activities & actions based on need determination (week 5)
3. Identify community partners and facilities for activities (week 6-7)
4. Monitor implementation participation and success

**Assessment:** This project is feasible if there is leadership and dedication to bring it to fruition. Jefferson Healthcare has expressed interest in seeing more structured activity for youth as a preventative factor for teen mental health. Individuals and organizations could also create or expand programming separate from a coordinated effort.

Funding - to be determined.

Addresses Long term Issues: Yes

**Governmental Involvement:** to be determined.

#### **5. FAMILY RESOURCES NAVIGATOR (funded by CARES thru 12/1/2020)**

##### **Objectives & Desired Outcomes:**

Families are often struggling to cope with the challenges they are facing due to:

- a lack of awareness of existing resources
- barriers to accessing resources
- little to no resources to support their issues

- a combination of all of the above

Community agencies and health care providers find themselves in a similar situation – they, too, are often unaware of services that are available to support the families they serve. Knowing that early intervention is critical in the continuum of care for vulnerable families, finding a way to connect families to all available resources can enable them to move from “in crisis” to “vulnerable” and from “vulnerable” to “thriving.”

The Family Resource Navigator will be responsible for developing develop an outcome-based, centralized approach to support children and families; and advocate on behalf of children and families to ensure accessibility to the resources they need.

#### Outcomes for families

- Connection to resources that are appropriate for their needs
- Increased efficacy, resilience factors, and ability to thrive
- Deeper sense of community support

#### Outcomes for community-based organizations/healthcare sector

- Increased awareness of resources available to the children/families they serve
- Expanded/enhanced inter-agency partnerships to fill and/or mitigate gaps in services to families
- Improved health and resilience outcomes for children/families

#### **Proposed Lead Organization & Supporting Roles:**

Olympic Peninsula YMCA/Jefferson County Branch and MCS Counseling

#### **Action Steps & Timeframe:**

By mid-November the FRN will:

- Complete Community Scan
- Finalize Assessment Tools
- Launch Intake/Outreach Pathways
- Develop Marketing Materials
- Collect and Organize Database of Resources
- Begin Utilization of Assessment & Readiness to Change Model

#### **Assessment: *Show that it is Tangible, Fundable, Legal, Able To Be Implemented, and Addresses Recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.***

The Family Resource Navigator (FRN) will have an “intake” conversation with families to evaluate readiness to change and/or identify potential barriers to engaging with support services. The FRN will also complete a family stability assessment. From there, the FRN will develop a family-centered plan and will both advocate for and connect families with the programs and services they need. The FRN will evaluate the efficacy of the support services that children and families are using and will close the feedback loop with referring partners e.g. teachers and healthcare providers.

#### **Does it also help address long-standing issues? Describe.**

According to data from 2018, 25% of families in Jefferson County would benefit from prevention/intervention services in order to thrive. This is in addition to the 13% of families who are classified as “in crisis” and in need of emergency services. Jefferson County has a multitude of community

organizations that have the potential to serve as a robust safety net for vulnerable children and families but there is no central repository or hub that highlights all of the available options.

## **6. CHILDCARE SUPPORT FUNDS (funded by CARES thru 12/1/2020)**

### **Objectives & Desired Outcomes:**

The purpose of this project is to ensure that families have access to safe, affordable child care.

### **Proposed Lead Organization & Supporting Roles:**

Olympic Peninsula YMCA/Jefferson County Branch

### **Action Steps & Timeframe:**

The YMCA will work with employers and local childcare providers to identify families who need additional support to cover the cost of childcare.

### **Assessment: *Show that it is Tangible, Fundable, Legal, Able To Be Implemented, and Addresses Recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.***

Due to the current hybrid model for providing classroom education, working families are faced with needing all-day care (versus before- or after-school) that may cost up to triple what they would normally pay. These funds will provide child care subsidies for low- to moderate-income families who do not qualify for or who are in the process of qualifying for state assistance through the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF); and to supplement state assistance as needed for families who are already receiving support through DCYF.

### **Does it also help address long-standing issues? *Describe.***

The cost and availability of childcare has been a long-standing issue in Jefferson County. Of the estimated 3,000 children who are from households where both parents work, there are only 237 spots available with licensed or family childcare providers. Childcare providers have functioned with slim financial margins for years, and the complexity related to licensing and other regulations has made business sustainability a challenge. The increased cost of providing childcare is passed on directly to consumers – thereby limiting the number of families who can afford quality care for their children.

### **Describe any Legislation/Advocacy needed for this at the State, Federal or Local levels.**

Increasing DCYF reimbursement rates (currently at ~60% of the actual cost of care) could enable licensed childcare providers to reduce the fees they charge to families who do not qualify for state assistance.

## **7. Proctor House Study Lounge: (funded by CARES thru 12/1/2020)**

## **8. Stress Management & Emotional Resilience for Teens, The Benji Project (funded by CARES thru 12/1/2020)**

- **Project/Initiative Name** - Stress Management & Emotional Resilience for Teens
- **Objectives & Desired Outcomes** – Teach stress management and emotional resilience skills to adolescents via in-school classes in Port Townsend, Chimacum, Brinnon, and Quilcene over the 2020-2021 school year. Using an evidence-based curriculum based on mindfulness and self-compassion, the training offers adolescents tools to improve their own well-being before they hit a crisis. In controlled studies of the curriculum, participants showed meaningful and measurable decreases in depression, stress, and anxiety and significant increases in resilience, curiosity/exploration and gratitude.



- **Proposed Lead Organization & Supporting Roles** – The Benji Project, a four-year-old non-profit based in Port Townsend, in collaboration with administrators and teachers at each school.
- **Action Steps & Timeframe** – Provide 8-week sessions that fit the current school model (hybrid, online, or in-person) for students in grades 6, 9, and 12 over the course of the school year, customized to each school’s schedule and student population, subject to school agreement.
- **Assessment: Show that it is Tangible, Fundable, Legal, Able To Be Implemented, and Addresses Recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.**
  - **Tangible** - The program is based on a curriculum that has been in use internationally for about five years.
  - **Fundable** – A total budget of about \$28,200 will be funded by \$15,500 from Jefferson County CARES money, organization reserves, and other fundraising.
  - **Legal** - Yes
  - **Able to be implemented** – The Benji Project has successfully offered this program in the past and introduced it within the school setting at Port Townsend High School last year.
  - **Addresses COVID-19** – The pandemic has had severe negative effects on the mental health of teens due to isolation, disruption, financial stress on families, and the loss of meaningful events and milestones. Teachers and parents report that many adolescents are in or near crisis. In September, a 13-year-old boy died by suicide and three other teens made unsuccessful attempts.
- **Does it also help address long-standing issues? Describe.** Yes. Even before the COVID pandemic, adolescent mental health trends in Jefferson County were alarming, with high (and higher than state average) rates of suicide consideration and attempts, depression and worry.
- **Describe any Legislation/Advocacy needed for this at the State, Federal or Local levels.** Schools, especially at the management level, recognize the benefits of the program and are facilitating the program. But some teachers who are overwhelmed by managing rapid change and decreased contact time with students as a result of COVID can be resistant. We are optimistic we will get buy-in throughout the county, but local advocacy would be welcome.

**9. CASE MANAGEMENT FOR FOSTER CARE VOLUNTEERS, OLYMPIC ANGELS (funded by CARES thru 12/1/2020)**

- **Objectives & Desired Outcomes** –
  1. Recruit and manage new volunteers to address the expected upturn in foster community needs due to COVID-19. The effect is to reduce emotional stress on foster children and their caretakers through healthy, consistent relationships and whole family support (Goal 40+ hrs/mo/family).
  2. Educate current Love Box and Dare to Dream volunteers about the current MH crisis including suicide prevention. Volunteers will be more aware of causes of stress, observe signs, and help navigate resources.
- **Proposed Lead Organization & Supporting Roles** – Lead: Olympic Angels, Supporting: Foster Supports and MH-related training organizations (Kitsap Strong, XParenting, etc)
- **Action Steps & Timeframe** –
  1. Recruit, onboard, and match new volunteers – Ongoing

2. Establish partnerships with MH-related training organizations – 11/15/20
  3. Develop curriculum for volunteer force – 12/15/20
  4. Roll out program to volunteers – 1/15/21 (multiple sessions)
- **Assessment: Show that it is Tangible, Fundable, Legal, Able To Be Implemented, and Addresses Recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.**
    1. The initiative will be accomplished through increasing our case management and volunteer capacity and training that larger body of volunteers with theory and tactics for improving child mental health.
    2. Costs will include staffing expenses for case management and volunteer/family training.
  - **Does it also help address long-standing issues? Describe.**

Mental health has always been a major concern for foster children as a result of past trauma and neglect, as well as being removed from their birth families, homes, and, often, their entire community of support.

#### **10. Fall COVID Protection PR Campaign (funded by CARES thru 12/1/2020)**

- **Objectives:**
  1. Reinstill motivation to take precautions against COVID transmission.
- Combat “COVID Fatigue” and increased risk taking
- Provide Holiday Celebration Alternatives and risk reduction measures
- Help reduce the rising community infection rates, current and projected
- **Roles:**
  1. Project lead – DEM? facilitates project activities
    - 2. Project Committee - group of stake holders who plan & implement
    - 3. Ad hoc operational entities - implement components of action plan
- **Actions/Time:**
  1. Assign project lead, approach committee members. (Week 1)
    - 2. Conduct several meetings to establish strategy & methodology (Week 2)
    - 3. Flesh out methodologies into action items (Week 3)
- Implement action items in timed response to holidays & trends (Week 4+)
- Actions likely to be informational: posters, banners, PSAs, etc...

**Assessment:** Is tangible, fundable, legal and implementable. Addresses recovery by reducing severity and need for more extensive recovery.

**Address Long Term Issues:** No

**Governmental Involvement:** Minimal local government interaction largely related to approvals and potentially permits.

#### **11. Jefferson County Library: Storywalk**

##### **Objectives & Desired Outcomes:**

This project will install three separate StoryWalks™ around Jefferson County to promote literacy, physical exercise in the outdoors, and community and family engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

##### **Proposed Lead Organization & Supporting Roles:**

The Jefferson County Library District will lead the project, in collaboration with Jefferson County Parks and Recreation, Jefferson County Public Health, and local school districts.

### **Action Steps & Timeframe:**

Partnerships with local organizations were established and permissions for installation acquired in September 2020. We proposed three sets of StoryWalks, one each to be displayed at the Jefferson County Library, a Jefferson County Park, and a Jefferson County School District.

Materials to craft the StoryWalks will be acquired by the Jefferson County Library in October 2020, and the StoryWalks will be assembled by library staff.

The StoryWalks will be installed in on Brinnon Schools property, at HJ Carroll Park, and at the Jefferson County Library in early November 2020. The StoryWalk books will be rotated through these sites during the course of the year. Where possible, stories will be displayed on both sides of the signs to facilitate access to a story from which ever end you approach the walk.

### **Assessment: *Show that it is Tangible, Fundable, Legal, Able To Be Implemented, and Addresses Recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.***

**Tangible:** StoryWalks are an innovative and simple way for children and families to enjoy reading and the outdoors at the same time. Laminated pages from a children’s book are attached to metal signposts installed along an outdoor path. As you stroll down the trail, you are directed to the next page in the story. A recently installed example, funded by CARES Act monies, can be seen in Spokane, WA: <https://www.kxly.com/take-a-stroll-and-read-a-story-along-the-way-at-comstock-park/>

**Fundable:** This StoryWalk project is a low-cost, easily funded project. Total expenses are expected to be approximately \$5,000 and include equipment, books, and laminating supplies only.

**Legal:** StoryWalks have been installed in 50 states and 12 countries including, Germany, Canada, England, Bermuda, Russia, Malaysia, Pakistan and South Korea. There are no anticipated legal issues—all permissions for installation have been secured with collaborator agencies. The trademarked StoryWalk® was created by Anne Ferguson of Montpelier, VT and has developed with the help of Rachel Senechal, Kellogg-Hubbard Library.

**Able to be Implemented:** Installation locations have been secured; materials have been/are being purchased; assembly is being handled by library staff; there are no known impediments to the implementation of this project. It is expected that all three StoryWalks will be installed and open to the public by early November.

**Address Recovery from impacts of COVID-19 Pandemic:** StoryWalks of Jefferson County will promote literacy, physical exercise in the outdoors, and community and family engagement (and meet physical distancing recommendations!) during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. In addition to providing a safe, simple way for families to get exercise and practice early literacy skills during and after the pandemic, StoryWalks have been recommended by mental health professionals as an easy, no-cost activity to promote outdoor exercise and mental wellbeing.

### **Does it also help address long-standing issues? *Describe.***

StoryWalks help to address challenges in early literacy, community wellness, and family engagement; they also provide a very visible connection to and reminder of the public library’s deep resources for county residents.

### **THE FUTURE**

The Children and Families Community Group has identified the 1-5 year time frame (2022-2027) as critical to creating secure and stable conditions to support this population in Jefferson County. While conditions pre-Covid were precarious for families, how we rebound from the pandemic could make-or-break the ability of the mid-career workforce to settle here.

There are three essential needs that must be addressed to ensure a future for families here: Affordable housing, living wage jobs and mental health supports. They are inexorably intersectional. Achieving functional mental health is often not possible if housing is insecure. And finding a safe home is often out of reach without a living wage job. These three legs of the stool must be addressed strategically and intersectionally.

While some people would attribute the livability challenges that families here face to “market forces”, there are demonstrated, structural changes that could be implemented to reverse this trajectory. While the Jobs & Economy Community Group will address the “Living Wage Jobs” leg of the stool, the Children & Families group identifies the following mid-term needs:

- **The Housing Solutions Network (HSN)** is calling out creative solutions to our housing availability and affordability crisis. Whether through home sharing, co-ownership or changes to building codes, there is a local non-profit and membership base committed to finding creative solutions to the disparities in housing here. With 25% of our housing stock being vacant part-time/ vacation rental/ second homes while nearly half of renters are “cost-burdened”, there is a clear need to narrow the housing gap. HSN serves an important role in motivating all people- individuals, organizations and governments- to be part of the myriad solutions we need to consider for housing.
- **The need for a Community Land Trust (CLT).** CLT’s provide affordable entry into home ownership, often a critical aspect to retaining young professionals in a community. Homeward Bound Community Land Trust, which owns property in Clallam County, is currently working to get established in Jefferson County as a provider of permanently affordable home ownership. CLTs will need support in the form of land donations and subsidy in order to get established in communities like ours with high land values.
- **Multifamily, Affordable Housing:** Jefferson County has been unable, in the past 15 years, to attract investors and developers of multifamily housing, which is the most affordable way to produce much-needed inventory of units. High land prices, lack of infrastructure and strict environmental regulation are all factors contributing to this problem. Identifying lands that are buildable
- **Additional Childcare Options:** Lack of affordable, flexible childcare options are a barrier for parents, especially women, to enter or re-enter the job market. Currently there are only 2 childcare providers that accept DSHS subsidy vouchers.

Jefferson Healthcare, Peninsula College, and the YMCA partnered to apply for a Washington State Department of Commerce Child Care Planning Grant and received planning funds to develop increased child care. Because of the current “child care desert”, Jefferson Healthcare struggles to recruit and maintain employees. The COVID-19 outbreak exacerbated our county’s already limited and full child care offerings. The planning grant includes development of start-up funds for a new child care program. Because child care during the COVID-19 outbreak requires larger spaces and more teachers, additional funds (approximately \$50,000) will be needed to successfully launch this program.

- **Dedicated facility for family wellness:** Beyond the need for coordinated family resources, a stable, purpose-built facility to support recreational, physical health, childcare and nutrition is needed to serve as an anchor for working families. Many parents have moved from Jefferson County specifically to live in communities with recreational facilities for the myriad benefits they provide.

The YMCA has been working with the City and other partners for many years to finalize a design and campaign for such a facility. While it has met many challenges, maintaining this vision (and seeing it to completion) will be critical to retain working families here.

- **Mental health interventions along the continuum:** As noted in the Community Resilience Recommended Action above, there is need for both immediate interventions and long-term planning for on-going strategy and implementation across demographics. We recognize there are significant shifts occurring in this field currently, notable the integration of behavioral health into the healthcare system. Members of the Children & Families Community Group will continue to encourage that these efforts include preventive measures for youth, creating a culture of trauma-informed care with all providers, parental support groups and ways to combat social isolation.
  
- **Emphasize Social Determinants of Health via CHIP and other efforts:** The Community Health Improvement Plan provides an ideal avenue to explore the impacts of economics and demographics on the well-being of children and families. This lens is critical to making clear the connections between housing, wages, mental health and physical well-being. Children and families are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of insecurity and instability due to:
  1. The presence of dependents in the home and the need for a larger, more expensive home;
  2. The need to feed, clothe and house more individuals, some of whom (children) don't bring in financial resource;
  3. The need to invest time to provide necessary attachment and nurturing for healthy physical, social and emotional development;
  4. Less flexibility in scheduling and career choice to support a structured, safe home and family life.

For these reasons, assessing all community needs from the Social Determinants of Health framework is critical to ensuring that families are served.

**CONCLUSION:** The well-being of children and families in Jefferson County was at risk before Covid and how we recover now may well determine if and how working families are able to live here in the future. The impacts of that would be felt in our economy with challenges in filling vacancies and in our schools, who struggle with falling census and funding. Families, and the organizations and institutions they support, are pillars to upholding healthy, diverse, productive communities. Keeping families central to the conversations about how we re-think and re-build post-Covid will provide myriad benefits to all residents.

## Human Services Community Working Group

**LEAD SECTOR:** Human Services Work Group

**SUPPORTING/OVERLAPPING SECTOR(S):**

The Human Services Work Group worked in collaboration with three other community work groups.

All of these projects were funded through the CARES Act funding received in Jefferson County.

First, we communicated our support to the **Broadband Work Group**. Many of our team members suggested and prioritized improving Broadband access that would aid with Human Services issues like assisting students and families with education or adult access to information about COVID-19. Members of the Human Services work group attended a Broadband Work Group meeting to help highlight areas of overlap and projects with mutual interest.

The team also worked with the **Food and Resiliency Work Group** to submit two proposals to the BOCC.

1. Provide funding to create and distribute food boxes to families whose children are receiving free and reduced meals through the School Districts. Different School Districts have different approaches to delivering meals to youth during the pandemic. The requested funds would be used for organizational and distribution costs to provide additional food to families receiving aid for their children.
2. Some vulnerable City and County residents, particularly people who are seniors and/or immunocompromised, are currently experiencing profound food security challenges, exacerbated by COVID. Currently there are programs in Jefferson County that provide meal delivery to vulnerable seniors, but dietary restrictions and other barriers often mean these services do not work for everyone. OlyCap is uniquely positioned to have a greater impact on these individuals by administering a new program to address their unique needs. With the help of emergency COVID funds currently available, OlyCap could employ staff and/or volunteers to make grocery purchases (from a shopping list acquired by the client) and home deliveries to these individuals in a COVID-safe manner.

Finally, the team worked with the **Children & Families Work Group** to develop two proposals:

1. A request for a Family Resources Navigator. Many residents and families of Jefferson County struggle with complex and urgent mental, physical, and substance-related health needs, which have only grown more urgent in the COVID era. An important need for these families is a centralized hub where they can access resources and have an advocacy system in place. It is no secret that these individuals/families often interact with the criminal justice system and are disproportionately likely to have frequent contact with emergency services. These contacts cost county tax dollars and increase the potential for COVID exposure for both those seeking services and the service providers themselves. Currently, emergency services can't be coordinated in a manner that follows-through to address ongoing needs of the individuals/families after an emergency has abated.

2. A request for Youth Tutoring and Support Facility Space. Provide a room and paid tutors for kids struggling with absenteeism for study and support. This is a way to reach kids that “dropped out of sight” when school went virtual. Proctor House and/or OlyCap are two agencies who could provide a structured space for these kids to participate in school activities, planning, tutoring, and support, and even potentially offer workshops and walk-in emergency rental assistance program location in addition. Expected ages approx. 13-17 but could consider college students up to 24 years of age. Kids, parents, school staff/teachers, probation counselors, truancy boards or courts can all refer students to this center. Schools are supportive and see the need, and 15-20 kids are already identified. Expected capacity approx. 20-25 kids.

**COMMUNITY GROUP MEMBERS:**

Name	Affiliation
Ariel Speser	Port Townsend City Councilmember and ICC Liaison to Human Services Group
Bob Wheeler	Olympic Neighbors Board President and Co-Lead for Human Services Group
John Nowak	Co-Director Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) Co-Lead for Human Services Group
Kathleen Kler	Former Jefferson County Commissioner District 3 and Jefferson Community Foundation (JCF) COVID Relief Grant Team Member
Catharine Robinson	Former Port Townsend City Councilmember and Jumping Mouse Therapist
Louise Huntingford	Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), Economic Services Administration, Community Services Division, Port Townsend
Claire Roney	Jefferson Clallam County Long-Term Care Ombuds Advisory Council and local Psychologist
Cherish Cronmiller	Olympic Community Action Programs (OlyCap) Executive Director
Anna McEnergy	Jefferson County Public Health Behavioral Health Committee, Mental Health Field Response Team, and Developmental Disabilities Program Staff Liaison
Jaci Hoyle	Olympic Area on Aging (OAAA) Direct Services Director
Jim Novelli	Discovery Behavioral Health Executive Director

Name	Affiliation
Celeste Schoenthaler	Olympic Community of Health Executive Director
Carol McCreary	Program Manager, Public Hygiene Lets Us Stay Human (PHLUSH)
Judson Haynes	City of Port Townsend Police Navigator
Nat Jacob	Jefferson County Public Defender
Tammy Tarsa	Jefferson Healthcare Home, Health, and Hospice
Gabbie Caudill	Believe In Recovery
Kimber Rotchford, MD	JC Mash Clinic
Trish Beathard	Brinnon School District Superintendent
Brian Richardson	Recovery Café

**SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The issues facing our community in the Human Services arena pre-date the COVID-19 pandemic. The addition of a global pandemic has served to exacerbate already difficult issues in our community. Issues like housing, poverty and lack of services have been at the root of the disparity plaguing Jefferson County for years. Vulnerable members of our community struggle to meet their basic needs.

COVID-19 has made all this much worse. Many residents and families of Jefferson County have complex and urgent mental, physical, and substance-related health needs, which have only grown more urgent in the COVID era. These vulnerable individuals and families need a centralized hub to access resources, be supported by community resources, and have an advocacy system in place. It is no secret that these community members often interact with the criminal justice system and are disproportionately likely to have frequent contact with emergency services. These contacts cost county tax dollars and increase the potential for COVID exposure for both those seeking services and the service providers themselves. Currently, emergency services can't be coordinated in a manner that follows-through to address ongoing needs of the individuals/families after an emergency has abated.

Our team has been working to develop solutions that augment and, in some cases, provide new services that enable community members to get help when they need it. Importantly, our Work Group focused substantial attention on efforts that are preventative, rather than reactive after a crisis has occurred. Most of us see so much more we could do, but we have tried to prioritize the actions to fill the most pressing needs.



## **PROBLEM/OPPORTUNITY STATEMENTS:**

COVID presents unique challenges to the delivery of human services for our community. The COVID crisis will also significantly decrease the funding available for these essential services. Members of Jefferson County's network of human service agencies have not yet coordinated resources to specifically address the challenges presented by COVID and its secondary impacts. The housing crisis that predated COVID is only growing worse as housing stock dwindles, while the need for supportive and affordable housing increases. Best practice Public Health guidelines for keeping community members safe require additional tools to implement and manage new safety protocols, intensifying gaps in service. Many of Jefferson County's vulnerable residents have not yet been identified by existing service providers.

But this crisis may represent an opportunity for local agencies to emerge more resilient, agile and interconnected. The purpose of this Work Group is to address the following community needs considering this new landscape:

1. Identify priorities for delivery of services;
2. Focus on being preventative instead of reactive to issues;
3. Consolidate services to mitigate budget cuts;
4. Provide emergency and transitional housing for our community's most vulnerable;
5. Guarantee that our residents have access to reliable internet, phone or mail;
6. Explore how existing social safety net structures can become more adaptable;
7. Conduct efforts to determine the health and wellbeing of the Jefferson County community;
8. Develop programs for community members to become connected to needy individuals;
9. Consolidate and expand resources and service provider information;
10. Create new partnerships with the goal of maximizing limited funding; and,
11. Take real solutions to local officials to adopt as policy and implement.

## **INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS:**

***The following projects were funded as part of the original CARES funding approved by the BOCC. Our team recommends that additional funding be obtained to continue funding these essential services when the CARES funding runs out.***

### **1. American Legion Shelter Open 24/7, Cost per month: \$12,600.00**

For the Shelter to be open 24/7 requires staffing at an additional 3 shifts per day, at a cost of \$140.00 per shift. There are always 2 staff members on every shift, a male and a female. There are three, eight hour shifts in a day, with two people for a total of 6 shifts. Each person costs approximately \$17.50 per hour (salary plus fringe.) There is no additional administration or operating charge included in the calculation. With 3 extra shifts per day, at \$140.00 a shift, it would be \$420.00 a day in additional staff cost. Calculating 30 days in a month is \$12,600.00 a month to have the Legion open 24/7. The shelter is crucial to a population that has been released from medical care, inpatient treatment, incarceration and struggles with chronic homelessness. This population is able to comply with rules and regulations pertaining to congregate sheltering and would benefit significantly from having a safe place to stay during the day that is warm and secure. Most of the places where unsheltered people used to congregate during the day are currently closed or have limited capacity, such as libraries, coffee shops, and grocery stores. As such, allowing the shelter to stay open provides our unsheltered community

members a safe place to be during the day. It also would provide unsheltered community members accessible shower and laundry facilities to maintain personal hygiene needs.

**2. Weekend Meals Available at Shelter, Cost per month: \$2,520.00**

Due to COVID, COAST is not able to provide regular and weekend meals at the Shelter. Similarly, other faith partners providing meals are low on funding due to not holding regular services. The Shelter buys meals from the hospital at \$7.00 a meal. It is reasonable to estimate 30 meals for a regular Friday night, Saturday and Sunday. At 30 meals, \$7.00 a meal, for 3 days, equals \$610.00 a weekend, and with roughly 4 weekends in a month, a total of \$2,520.00. Meals are available to people staying at the Shelter and other unsheltered individuals in the community who are in need of hot meals on the weekends. This is a necessary and essential service that directly supports Jefferson County's most vulnerable community members' health and well-being.

**3. Utility Assistance, Cost per month \$10,000.00**

There is an increased need for utility assistance due to household incomes being negatively impacted by COVID. Though shut-offs have been halted, community members are still accumulating past due accounts and will receive shut-off notices when the moratoriums expire. Vouchers for utility assistance are always paid directly to the utility providers on the customer's behalf. Community members whose household income has been negatively impacted by COVID are also struggling to pay medical insurance costs, car insurance, phone and internet bills. Likewise, homeowners in Jefferson County need help with mortgage assistance and many do not qualify for funding with CDBG. In order to qualify for an affordable loan repayment plan, homeowners in arrears often need help with an initial payment.

**4. COVID Navigator, Cost per month \$5,720.00**

Many residents of Jefferson County and the City of Port Townsend struggle with complex and urgent mental, physical, and substance-related health needs, which have only grown more urgent in the COVID era. It is no secret that these individuals often interact with the criminal justice system and are disproportionately likely to have frequent contact with emergency services. These contacts cost county tax dollars and increase the potential for COVID exposure for both those seeking services and the service providers themselves. Currently, emergency services are not coordinated in a manner that follows-through to address ongoing needs of the individuals after an emergency has abated. Navigator programs are beginning to emerge to provide "on scene" resources and divert people who most frequently engage with emergency services, but there is currently no program in place to "take the ball" from the navigator in order to assist these individuals bridge the gap between emergency contact and ongoing care. OlyCAP has hired a COVID Navigator whose specific job is to work with vulnerable populations in non-emergent capacity (i.e., to schedule and transport people to medical appointments, take them to DSHS to sign up for services, etc.). Funding this type of program would be cost-efficient, by mitigating the need for constant (and very expensive) emergency department and jail visits and increasing public safety by keeping emergency services from being unnecessarily tied-up during the pandemic. This person is paid \$26.00/hr, roughly 160hrs a month, equals \$4,160.00, plus a fringe cost of roughly 25% equals \$1,040.00 (after December this person could no longer be classified as "temporary" and would have to be paid benefits.) Calculating an ICR of 12.5% on the

initial salary amount is \$520.00 to pay for phone, IT, facilities, and administrative oversight. Total is \$5,720.00 per month.

**5. OlyCAP Tutors Available in Port Townsend, Brinnon and Quilcene, Cost per month: \$2,400.00 (In coordination with Families & Children Work Group)**

Students are struggling with the online learning environment. Having tutors available at various hours will be helpful for students that need extra support as a result of COVID. Having a tutor/support person at \$15 an hr, 40 hrs a week, is \$600 a week, for a total of \$2,400.00 for 4 weeks. OlyCap will conduct appropriate background checks and absorb costs associated with hiring and screening any tutors. This could be one person full-time, two part-time people, or multiple tutors, culminating in 40 hrs per week.

**6. Delivery of Food to Seniors and Immunocompromised, Cost per month \$740.00**

Some vulnerable City and County residents, particularly people who are seniors and/or immunocompromised are currently experiencing profound food security challenges, exacerbated by COVID. Currently there are programs in Jefferson County that provide meal delivery to vulnerable seniors, but dietary restrictions and other barriers often mean these services do not work for everyone. OlyCap is uniquely positioned to have a greater impact on these individuals by administering a new program to address their unique needs. With the help of emergency COVID funds currently available, OlyCap could employ staff and/or volunteers to make grocery purchases (from a shopping list acquired by the client) and home deliveries to these individuals in a COVID-safe manner. We anticipate 10 hours a week, \$15 an hour, part-time position to help persons in the community who are struggling to get food from the grocery stores and/or foodbanks. This service will become more critical as the holidays approach. For staff \$150.00 a week, for 4 weeks \$600.00, adding \$35.00 a week for vehicle cost and gas, is \$140.00 total and \$740.00 a month. This would provide for a scheduled 10hr week delivery driver for Jefferson county residents.

**REVISED OR NEW PROJECTS:**

***The following projects were either submitted for the initial CARES Act funding and did not receive funding or have not been previously submitted. Our team strongly recommends additional funding for these projects.***

**7. Emergency Housing for Families, Cost per month \$4,500**

OlyCap is renting three kitchenette rooms from a local hotel that are for use by families as a result of COVID's effect on the household. The cost per room is \$50.00 a night, 30 nights per month, and three rooms adds to \$4,500.00 per month. OlyCap is handling case management, unless another partner is coordinating placement and already handling the case management.

**8. Evening Monitoring at Jefferson County Fairgrounds, One-time cost of \$10,000.00 (or less to secure an RV, Monthly cost of \$6,300.00)**

OlyCap staff will monitor the Fairgrounds and work with clients to keep the areas clean and in compliance with health code rules. Monitors will enforce rules regarding noise, trash, and

behavior while at the site. Monitors will work with the police, navigator and other organizations to uphold health and safety standards. OlyCAP will track the clients entering and leaving the site. Monitoring will be from 7:00 pm until 7:00 am daily. Two staff members will split the time into two six-hour shifts. Ideally, a camper/RV will be placed on site for use by the monitor and to allow campers a place to go to seek services on site or get a cup of coffee. Similar to the American Legion, at \$17.50 hr, 12 hrs a day, 30 days equals \$6,300.00 a month.

**9. South Seven’s Wooden Tent Structures in Port Hadlock, Monthly cost \$3,000.00**

Wooden tents are being constructed (four so far, could be upwards of 12 made.) They would hook to electrical. There would be a bathroom trailer put on site for toilet and showering facilities. These would be targeted to seniors (to match the population already present.) Given that congregate sheltering is limited due to COVID, this is an option to shelter up to twelve other persons without a habitable place to stay. These funds would help with the cost of electric, water, sewer, and trash.

**10. How is your Neighbor, Jefferson?**

<b>Project Plan</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	<p><i>How’s Your Neighbor, Jefferson? Campaign</i></p> <p><b>Contact:</b> Jud Haynes  <a href="mailto:judsonahaynes@gmail.com">judsonahaynes@gmail.com</a>           Anna Mc Enery  <a href="mailto:amcenery@co.jefferson.wa.us">amcenery@co.jefferson.wa.us</a></p>
<b>Project Description:</b>	
<p>Due to COVID and its restrictions, Jefferson County residents have become increasingly isolated. Many of these residents are unable to engage with others in their respective communities and are likely unaware of local and state support resources available to them. Of significant concern, is the potential increase of individuals in distress because of COVID-19. Informing residents of non-crisis supportive services will assist those who are in a position to provide support within their respective communities and possibly avert future crises.</p>	
<b>Benefits:</b>	<p>The campaign called “<i>How’s Your Neighbor Jefferson?</i>” will focus on facilitating connection, by informing community members of pertinent crisis and non-crisis resources. The information is intended for those experiencing distress, as well as for empowering those who are aware of neighbors’ who are isolated and in need of support.</p> <p>The Sub-committee called <i>Connecting with Individuals and Groups</i>, aims to assist these individuals by providing critical information and resources to residents of Jefferson County.</p>
<b>Objectives Deliverables:</b>	<p>To address this issue, the <i>Connecting with Individuals and Groups</i> Sub-committee, proposes the creation of the “<i>How’s Your Neighbor Jefferson?</i>” campaign. The following are anticipated requirements of the campaign:</p> <p>Two variations of the card:</p> <p>a. Information about local services to include non-crisis services (i.e., the warm line for people living with emotional and mental health challenges, OlyCAP,</p>

	<p>Dove House, Discovery Behavioral Health, Food Bank, housing resources, homeschooling resources, faith-community resources).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. This card would be distributed through PUD and Port Townsend Water and Sewer, Public Health, Law Enforcement, First Responders, Transit, Chamber of Commerce, Schools etc.....</li> </ul> <p>B. Information about local services to include non-crisis services as well as space on the card for students or neighbors to add a personal message before placing it on a neighbor's door.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Students, neighbors, and volunteers would be enlisted to distribute this card.</li> </ul> <p>C. Create a banner that is placed in a highly visible location when entering Port Townsend, Port Hadlock, Port Ludlow, Chimacum, Quilcene, Coyle and Brinnon. The banners would provide information about the campaign with an Instagram hashtag <i>#howyourneighborJefferson?</i></p> <p>D. Information about the <i>#howyourneighborJefferson</i> campaign may be linked to websites, like the Jefferson Community Foundation, Public Health, City, County, Chamber &amp; other interested agencies or businesses in Jefferson County.</p> <p>E. Inclusion and consideration of community members with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), those with mental health concerns and those who are isolated.</p> <p>F. A Social Media consultant will communicate with public affairs specialists to creatively get the word out about the <i>#howyourneighborJefferson</i> campaign, so of crisis &amp; non-crisis supportive services can be made available for those who are in distress because of COVID, (using social media, marketing..etc.)</p>
<p><b>Success Criteria:</b></p>	<p>Increase use of non-crisis support services and appropriate service referral.  Reduction in crisis services  Enhanced community engagement throughout Jefferson County</p>
<p><b>Resources Required:</b></p>	<p>Cost to create and print Rack Cards, Banners, Marketing Materials: \$6,700  Social Media Creation/Management: \$10,800 (\$35.00 an hour-for up to 310 hours)</p> <p>TOTAL \$17,500</p>
<p><b>Potential Partners:</b></p>	<p>Chamber of Commerce,  DSHS  O3A  OlyCAP  The Dove House  Discovery Behavioral Health  Jefferson Healthcare  Emergency Preparedness  First Responders  Food Banks  Port Townsend Water and Sewer PUD  Public Health</p>

	Law Enforcement Transit Schools		
<b>Potential Concerns</b>			
<b>Project Group Members:</b> Jud Haynes Claire Roney Phil Rowe Jaci Hoyle Anna Mc Enery		<b>Outside Partner Representatives:</b>	Chamber of Commerce, DSHS O3A OlyCAP The Dove House Discovery Behavioral Health Jefferson Healthcare Emergency Preparedness First Responders Food Banks Port Townsend Water and Sewer PUD Public Health Law Enforcement Transit Schools

## 11. Public Survey and Community Volunteers

### PROJECT/INITIATIVE, OBJECTIVES & DESIRED OUTCOMES

This proposal is focused on providing funding for a two-part project:

- 1) Conduct a pilot project community survey to obtain a sense of the community’s health and wellbeing under the unique challenges of the COVID -19 pandemic, and include the ability of community individuals and families to indicate their need for help and assistance because of the impacts of COVID - 19;
- 2) Solicit for a group of trained Community Volunteers (CVG), possibly connected with Olycap’s RSVP program, who in the long-term can provide human connections for those in the community who either self-identify or who are otherwise identified that, because of COVID – 19, are isolated and need help and assistance, or potentially just a human contact.

By being proactive in connecting with those who are isolated, human to human contact will decrease the need for more extensive assistance after a crisis in those individuals or families occurs.

### IDENTIFICATION OF LEAD & SUPPORTING ROLES

The lead on this project could be OlyCap with support from the various government agencies.

### PROPOSED ACTION STEPS

**Part 1** - Conduct a pilot study WHO-5 Survey of the Jefferson County community that would help assess the health and well-being of Jefferson County in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and allow for individuals to identify if they need a human contact/connection because of how they have personally been impacted by COVID–19. Promote participation in responding to survey questions to help identify the health of the community initially and over time and possibly better identify early those

who may benefit from services. It is anticipated that participation in the survey will be therapeutic and preventive by itself.

- Use direct mailout postcards to families and individuals, advertise in The Leader, KPTZ, and the Next Door Blog, provide handouts at public places (such as the food banks, social service agencies), and develop other means to promote participation in the survey.
- Under this Part 1 effort, conduct an initial pilot project survey. Frequency of future surveys would be determined based on availability of resources and level of response to this first survey. Survey would be anonymous. Survey would also include an invitation to have a Community Volunteer contact them and a means for doing so.

**Part 2** – Begin the development of a Community Volunteer Group (CVG), possibly connected with OlyCap’s RSVP program, to provide human connection/contact necessitated by the impacts on families and individuals of COVID – 19. These Community Volunteers would form the long-term core team, again likely in coordination with Olycap’s RSVP program, for reaching out to those who have indicated a desire for a human connection because of COVID -19. The focus here is for the Community Volunteers to be solely human contact for those, who, because of COVID – 19, are isolated. These Community Volunteers would not be a replacement for the work the agencies/organizations presently perform. While the Community Volunteers might refer individuals/families to resources, their efforts would be limited to providing initial and ongoing human connections and providing referrals to agencies. It is envisioned that during this initial period protocols and the organizational structure for this Volunteer group would be developed, including consideration of training needs for these volunteers.

## 12. Community Resource Guide

**BACKGROUND:** Some of the most at risk in our community have the least access to the information they need to be able to identify services that might be able to help them. Much work has been done to identify services that might available to community members, but it is not easily available in a simple transportable format.

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:** Create and widely distribute resource list of available human services. There are many organizations in our community with a variety of human services available to people in need of these services. Many times, they may not even be aware of their existence or how to access them.

**Project/Initiative Name:** Develop easily distributable guide of available services.

**Objectives & Desired Outcomes:** Provide easy access to information about services in Jefferson County.

Provide the resource guide to Law Enforcement, EMS, Food Banks, Libraries and other location that will allow those in need of services to easily access the guide.

**Proposed Lead Organization & Supporting Roles:** Jefferson County CHIP team and Recovery Café.

**Action Steps & Timeframe:** The CHIP team has already developed a comprehensive guide of services. They will work with Recovery Café staff to develop a simple single page quick-reference guide of limited services that can be carried by care providers and located in places in the community to help make it easier to locate services.

CHIP has contacted the Printery, they will print the guide and the CHIP team will distribute the guides in the community and to involved agencies.

Timeframe: Completed by Jan 2021

**Assessment Shows that it is Tangible, Fundable, Legal, Able to Be Implemented, and Addresses Recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic:** This project will address a basic need that has been an issue in the community for a long time. No funding is necessary for the initial distribution. The plan is simple and easily implementable. It will help those impacted by COVID to more easily access the services they need.

**Does it also help address long-standing issues?** While it will aide with COVID-19 recovery it will continue to be valuable resource after our community recovers from the COVID pandemic.

**Describe any Legislation/Advocacy needed for this at the State, Federal or Local levels.** Just support from agencies that might distribute the guide.

### **OTHER PROJECTS:**

***In addition to the projects listed above, the Human Services Work Group also supports the following projects that overlap with other Work Groups or outside agencies:***

- The **Broadband Work Group's** effort at expanding and making widely available broadband access.
- The **Culture & Events Work Group** effort to provide outdoor rain-protected facilities. Human Services further encourages communications with the School Districts on how outdoor rain-protected facilities can be incorporated into school facilities where they do not already exist.

The **Culture & Events Work Group** effort to provide an ADA-accessible toilet trailer for public spaces and events, that can also be used by local nonprofits serving unsheltered community members when not rented out. Shared use of a bathroom trailer makes sense in terms of timing. Used for events in the summer, it could serve a temporary emergency encampment of tiny houses throughout the winter. Similarly, the trailer could be used for weekend events and then move to locations in mid- and south county during the week to bring showers to inadequately housed people,

- The **Children & Families Work Group** on enhancing or supplementing daycare offerings. A focus for Human Services is to expand this need to children too young for the YMCA or licensed daycare providers (most require children to be at least 2-years-old).
- The **Children & Families Work Group** on aiding parents with school aged children, especially guidance for parents addressing school curriculums.
- The **Food Resiliency Work Group** on food provision and delivery and adds focus on helping support and expand the existing school backpack program.
- Infrastructure and funding for free and readily available **COVID testing** coordinated with Jefferson Healthcare and Jefferson County Public Health.
- Development of more **housing** at all levels.
- Watching for, and filling **human service gaps**, as they become identified.



## **THE FUTURE:**

### ***What Future Work and Actions are needed to address longer-term Community needs by This Group (or a similar/enhanced group) in 2021?***

Many of the proposals developed in this document support underlying social issues in our community. Most of these proposals should be funded beyond the end of the COVID pandemic. We believe the infrastructure is in place, if a funding source can be provided. Finally, our Work Group believes that the more comprehensive planning and activities achieved by the formation of the ICC community groups has been an excellent model for how to attack systemic community issues of inequity and poor access to services. We strongly encourage the ICC team to continue to collaborate and form sub-teams to propose solutions for difficult community problems and to prepare proposals for state, federal, foundation, and local charitable funding. It will be important for the ICC leadership team to keep track of which Work Groups are working on which community problems so there can be clear communication and good coordination across sectors. The Human Services Work Group has expressed a willingness to continue our efforts if there is a clear directive, purpose, and need for that continuation.

**PRIORITY PROJECTS:**

*Below is a list of priority projects, if there is Future Federal Funding in 2021.*

Project	Activity	Priority
New and creative solutions around safe, affordable, and quality housing that include emergency and longer term affordable housing	American Legion open 24/7 through December	1
	Single daily meal for clients sheltered at American Legion through December	
	Household Utility Assistance	
	Development of more housing at all levels from transitional housing to housing for working families	
	Once appropriate site(s) has been identified, create a formal proposal to bring to County administrator and/or County Commission for re-purposing this property to serve homeless population.	
	IGG Human Services Work Group commissions/generates an exhaustive list of county real estate (e.g. county campgrounds, parks, etc.) with an eye for where to shelter JeffCo's most vulnerable homeless population during and in the aftermath of the COVID crisis.	
Community-wide resilience and cohesion activities	OlyCap COVID Navigator	2
	Paid Tutors and physical facilities for students	
	Obtaining food and delivery for seniors/immune-compromised	
	How's Your Neighbor, Jefferson?	
	Governments and school districts identify rain-protected outdoor locations and manage their availability throughout the winter for school classes, community meetings, and people in need of social interaction.	
	Form a committee of communications and public affairs specialists from Governments, Public Health, the Chamber, health-oriented nonprofits, KPTZ, and Enjoy PT. Identify or recruit a facilitator skilled in behavior change communications, audience research, message testing, and identification of channels. Enlist local artists, filmmakers, actors, and musicians to produce posters, PSAs, and very short street performances	
Study/survey/effort to	Conducting a survey	3
	Community Volunteers for Human connections	

determine ongoing needs with referral to appropriate agencies/assistance	Identify disabled folks who may not be already identified through existing social services.	
	Provide personal contact services for these folks who may be isolated at home with little or no social/community contacts.	
	Bring some of the same services offered by a mental health professional and medication prescriber to individuals in their respective encampments or homes	
Funding for individuals/families who need assistance for rent, mortgage payments	Develop funding streams to assist families facing eviction due to loss of employment	4
	Assessing the need for help with insurance	
Create and widely distribute resource list of available human services	Development and distribution of a services list to community members that need the services	5
	There are many organizations in our community with a variety of human services available people in need of these services may not even be aware of their existence or how to access them.	
	ICC engages the Jefferson Community Foundation to create a Volunteer Clearing house. Governments, public institutions and third sector groups that serve basic needs identify gaps. Write volunteer job descriptions Create online platform, post opportunities, and intake forms. Eventually staff Clearinghouse itself with volunteers Find work for the hundreds of volunteers displaced from large events such as the County Fair, Wooden Boat Festival, and PTF. Reduced public revenues	

## **Food System Resilience Community Working Group**

**LEAD SECTOR:** Food System Security

**SUPPORTING/OVERLAPPING SECTOR(S):** Economy & Jobs, Children & Families, Human Services, Broadband

**COMMUNITY GROUP MEMBERS:**

Karen Affeld, Annie Bartos, Greg Brotherton, Rufina Garay, Crystie Kisler, Laura Lewis, Marki Lockhart, Pam Petranek, John Mauro, Cliff Moore, David Seabrook, Shelby Smith, and Kevin Street

**SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Our group of 13 community members, agricultural experts, educators and practitioners, have been focused on understanding both the immediate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the food system in Jefferson County and how prepared the food system is to deal with future shocks. Combining our collective knowledge and expertise alongside surveys and focus groups with regional food system actors, we conclude that the pandemic has both highlighted and worsened a number of long-standing vulnerabilities in the regional food economy and that it is also ill-prepared to handle further disruptions in the near future. In particular, the pandemic has led to a substantial increase in food insecurity among families who have lost income due to the crisis, disrupted food distribution systems making the availability of local food resources more important, and has stymied the regional food market where regional produce and goods are typically bought and sold.

Therefore, our recommendations can be summarized as two-fold:

1. To support the local farm and food economy to produce, process and distribute the food we need to feed vulnerable members of our community while generating sustainable livelihoods.
2. To support the development of a funded and staffed regional, appointed commission dedicated to strategic planning, policy-making, and integrated coordination across multiple agencies and organizations that prioritizes creating and promoting an equitable and sustainable food system.

Our recommendations consider the food economy as a holistic system that includes food production, food processing, food distribution, food access and consumption, and also attempts to resolve some of the underlying inequalities that underpin and sometimes undermine this system. The recommendations outlined below include a variety of ways the ICC can promote, educate, invest in, and foster community and cultural support for an environmentally and economically sustainable regional food system in the short term and in the future. We see this current moment as an opportune time to create new frameworks, new ways of doing business and new ways of supporting our regional community members. Therefore, we strongly recommend focused and sustained attention with political clout at a regional-level to ensure a healthy, resilient and equitable food system that is able to meet the needs of a diverse and growing community, and withstand and rebound from systems challenges such as pandemics, natural disasters and climate disruptions.

**1. Short-Term Opportunity Statement:** Support regional food and meal services for vulnerable residents such as food banks, SNAP-Ed, and other programs that provide food to residents.

**Background:** The economic crisis created by Covid-19 has increased food insecurity in the County and increased demand at area food banks and feeding programs. At the same time, area farmers have lost revenues because of the delayed opening of farmers markets and decreased sales at those markets, along with major decreases in sales to restaurants.

**Actions:**

To address the problem and capitalize on the resulting opportunity, the following **projects/initiatives** are recommended:

**1.1) Food Banks/Feeding Programs**

- **Objectives/Desired Outcomes:** Fund infrastructure needed to expand capacity at food banks and other feeding programs.
- **Proposed Lead Organization & Supporting Roles:**
  - Food Banks
  - Chimacum School District
  - OlyCap
  - YMCA
- **Action Steps and Timeframe:**
  - Provide funds for Food Banks to purchase back-up generators and additional storage capacity
  - Provide funds to keep the Chimicum multi-purpose room open for storage and preparation of takeaway school meals
- **Assessment:**
  - The Chimicum multi-purpose room project was awarded CARES funding
  - Funding is still requested to support infrastructural support for the Food Banks

**1.2) Olympic Peninsula Farmers Fund**

- **Objectives/Desired Outcomes:** Fund programs that make healthy local food available to families who need it.
- **Proposed Lead Organization & Supporting Roles:**
  - NODC
- **Action Steps and Timeframe:**
  - Contracts with local farmers to provide food to food banks and other feeding programs
- **Assessment:**
  - This project was awarded CARES funding

### 1.3) Jefferson County Farmers Market's SNAP-Ed Match program

- **Objectives/Desired Outcomes:** Fund programs that make healthy local food available to families who need it.
- **Proposed Lead Organization & Supporting Roles:**
  - Jefferson County Farmers Market
- **Action Steps and Timeframe:**
  - Provides a dollar-for-dollar match to double the amount that shoppers using SNAP funds have to spend at the Market
- **Assessment:**
  - This project was awarded CARES funding

### 1.4) Food boxes for families

- **Objectives/Desired Outcomes:** Fund programs that make healthy local food available to families who need it.
- **Proposed Lead Organization & Supporting Roles:**
  - NODC
- **Action Steps and Timeframe:**
  - Provide food boxes to families who have children in the home who are receiving school lunches
- **Assessment:**
  - This project was awarded CARES funding

### 1.5) Jefferson County Farmers Market Farm to Food Bank program

- **Objectives/Desired Outcomes:** Fund programs that make healthy local food available to families who need it.
- **Proposed Lead Organization & Supporting Roles:**
  - Jefferson County Farmers Market and/or WSU Extension
- **Action Steps and Timeframe:**
  - The ongoing management and operation of the program needs to be determined, but will likely involve collaboration between the new JCFM manager and the WSU SNAP-Ed Coordinator. It is possible WSU will have capacity to take on this role under the new Coordinator.
- **Assessment:**
  - Assessment of this activity will need to be delayed until the program's home agency has been determined.

**2. Short-Term Opportunity Statement:** Increase local food production for local consumption. Local food production would support food security regardless of disruptions to the global food supply and strengthen the local food-producing economy.

**Background:** Jefferson County has a long history of agricultural production, a moderate climate and a diversified base of small farms, yet it currently relies on producers and distributors outside the region for the vast majority of the food consumed by its population. COVID-19 resulted in disruptions across the global food system which created complications at a local scale. For example, grocery store chains were unable to keep up with the demand for certain staple products or commodities, and local farmers were unable to access the markets they depend on. COVID-19 exposed further flaws in food distribution, food-based labor sector, and government policies which keep local solutions uneasily achieved.

**Actions:**

- **Objectives/Desired Outcomes:** Support local farmers with the resources they need to plan, produce and process food for area residents.

- **Proposed Lead Organization & Supporting Roles:**

- WSU
- NODC
- County Conservation Futures Committee
- Conservation District
- Jefferson Land Trust
- OlyCap
- Landworks Collaborative

- **Initiatives** could include:

**2.1)** Develop mechanisms to encourage/facilitate linkages between local farmers and restaurants, schools, and large businesses

- **Action Steps:**

- Fund the annual conference of Eat Local First Olympic Peninsula, an existing campaign to promote local food, and its marketing campaign (alongside the Jobs and Economy Group)
- Recommend pandemic-responsive incentives and long-term incentives for regional stores to purchase regional food to support revival and recovery of agrarian economy to ensure future local food supply.
- Coalesce current research and identify additional research topics regarding strategies to promote new linkages and distribution models and a comprehensive understanding of food sources for aggregation of sales.

**2.2)** Mobilize winter food production models and store winter supply of dry and value-added goods for increased production and emergency preparedness

■ **Action Steps:**

- Provide onsite (farm-based) cold and cool storage, dry-good and general storage with alternative power sources.
  - Ideal request is to fund five farms within the region at \$10,000.
- Provide onsite (farm-based) green/hoop houses to extend growing season.
  - *Ideal request is to fund ten farms within the region at \$10,000.*
- Provide offsite (non-specific to a particular farm) emergency regional dry storage and commercial canning equipment.
  - Ideal request is \$10,000 for space and equipment.
- Provide Food Banks with generators or alternative power supply for existing cold storage.
  - Ideal request would be \$30,000 for three generators.

**2.4)** Create a new position for a business expert with farm-based enterprise experience to help navigate changing business laws, (changes to payroll taxes, huge spikes in unemployment fraud this past spring, etc) and help source or facilitate co-op buying of seeds, supplies, packaging, or other inputs.

- **Action Steps:** Create a City of Port Townsend or Jefferson County position to undertake these responsibilities. Total cost of 1 FTE, salary and benefits would be approximately \$60,000 to \$66,000

**2.5)** Examine zoning, permitting and local health regulations to reduce barriers including barriers to agricultural and food enterprise processing

- **Action Steps:** This activity could be led by the same individual described in 2.4 above, but would require consistent interaction with the Planning Commissions of Jefferson County and Port Townsend.



**3. Long-term Opportunity Statement:** Develop and support a regionally focused food and agriculture group of community leaders, experts and practitioners to research and focus on resolving systemic barriers and creating opportunities for an equitable and sustainable food system now and in preparation for future emergencies/shocks to the food system.

**Background:** Around the world, local municipalities have adopted governance frameworks that prioritize the needs of and support the growth of regional food economies. These bodies are most effective when they include elected representatives and/or local leaders who are responsible for enacting policy. The pandemic exposed to us that separate groups working in similar but disparate nodes of the food system could be more effective if they were combined, unified and representative of the regional food system including organizations that hold institutional knowledge. A unified governance structure would be able to bring together these disparate actors and nodes of the food system in order to plan and create a more sustainable and equitable approach to increasing regional food production and consumption. We suggest that Jefferson County adopt and appoint a new Food System Resiliency Commission (FSRC). The FSRC would be separate and different in mandate from the existing Port Townsend Food Policy Council; it is our understanding that this latter group has been largely inactive and was not housed within a local government structure to ensure policy change at a local or regional level. In addition, the council lacked access to a budget for staffing and other operational needs.

**Actions:**

**3.1)** Create a new employment opportunity for a “Food System Resilience Lead” This position, at .75 FTE would require funding of between \$53,000 and \$56,000, salary and benefits. At 1 FTE, the cost would be between \$60,000 and \$66,000

- **Objectives/Desired Outcomes:** This staff position would be responsible for over a three-year period at a minimum:
  - Organizing, facilitating, leading, and promoting this FSRC
  - Developing a matrix of relationships with community gardens, shellfish producers, fishers, foragers and hunters so those are ready and available for emergency activation
  - Researching and understanding the systemic challenges food producers face in the region and bringing these challenges to the attention of the FSRC for mitigation (e.g. including investigating particular models that can be utilized from other institutions such as Northern Arizona University’s FEWsion)
  - Activating more education around the diverse modes of food procurement and issues of accessibility
- **Proposed Lead Organization & Supporting Roles:**
  - Port, PUD, City and County
  - Potentially housed in DEM or WSU Extension or supported by several counties (e.g. Jefferson, Clallum, Kitsap)
  - WSU, UW, other regional food resilience committees

**3.2) Work with the ICC to create a structure for a regional FSRC, including membership and bylaws**

- **Objectives/Desired Outcomes:**
  - Recruit members who are representative of the constituents of the food system and food system organizations such as WSU, NODC, JCFM, OlyCap, Food Bank Farm to Food Bank project, Peninsula Food Coalition, Indigenous peoples, School District, Chefs, Grocery Store, Local 2020, Large-scale agribusiness and small-scale agribusiness, food processor, community-at-large member
  - Develop a North Olympic Food Resiliency Plan which includes specific policy and land-use arrangements to support regional food production, distribution and access.
  
- **Actions Steps to consider (not exhaustively):**
  - Work with Land Trust and/or Planning Commission to create more innovative cooperative housing and community trust models for making agricultural land accessible
  - Revisit county-wide development plans to:
    - Regularly review and make recommendations to update city and county codes
    - Ensure lands with designated vital soils are preserved for agriculture and not real estate.
    - Coordinate with housing planning agencies to manage housing needs for agrarian workforce and food production labor.
  - Consider and implement strategies to enable the purchase and placement of agricultural land into a public trust for community food production
  - Increase opportunities for acquisition of affordable agrarian land for small-scale food system enterprise. Initiatives could include:
    - Promoting low-cost, alternative financing for start-up businesses as well as support for conservation easements, cooperative ownership, incubator farms and other mechanisms to reduce the cost of entry into farming, with a goal of financing ten farms of a minimum of five acres each per year, in each of the following ten years.
    - Leasing new farmers unproductive lands designated for agriculture but currently not in use.
    - Developing a fundraising strategy that will be able to underwrite the cost of legal and tax services for small farms
    - Developing opportunities for aging farmers to pass the land on to new farmers and ensure they have the means to retire without selling their land for development.

- Incentivize new farmers to grow storage crops such as grains, nuts, beans and seeds
- Create associations for larger scale restaurant supported agriculture (RSAs), school supported agriculture (SSA), and healthcare supported agriculture (HSA) associations for economies of scale in purchasing for restaurants, schools, the hospital and other regional businesses to purchase directly from an aggregation of regional growers
- Create an educational awareness campaign around the environmental and social benefits of supporting regional food systems and subsidize markets to sell these products at price points accessible to all income levels.
- Evaluate and coordinate the emergency preparedness of the food sector in Jefferson, Clallam and Kitsap counties including:
  - Researching other rural populations' approaches to food emergencies such as the Alaska Food Policy Council or the Community Food Emergency and Resilience template
  - Analyzing the need for additional food-related policies and/or modification to existing policies to accommodate and adapt to future emergency-related work
  - Understanding the Counties' existing emergency procedures and any gaps in resources, knowledge of authority, know-how, or accessibility
  - Creating an emergency food cache system
  - Inventory supplies and set standards to monitor safe storage (humidity, temperature, possible infestations etc.)
- Find financially sustainable wage-sources for food processing workers
- Establish a navigable, online portal for multiple types of end-users in the holistic food system
  - to find the equipment, finances, and other resources (including university resources) to produce food,
  - to find available food at no cost during crisis or due to lack of ability to purchase, and
  - to identify transparently the interconnected agencies in support of food access and their current initiatives and projects.

## Broadband Community Working Group

**LEAD SECTOR:** Broadband

**SUPPORTING/OVERLAPPING SECTORS:** Children & Families, Economy & Jobs, Human Services

**COMMUNITY GROUP:**

The local volunteer organization JBAT (Jefferson Broadband Action Team) makes up the community for the Broadband Group. JBAT is a group of 32 people representing a real cross-section of Jefferson County: County, City, Port, PUD, EDC Team Jefferson, WSU Extension, Chamber of Commerce, education, healthcare, library, internet service provider, small business, and residents. The makeup of this team was intentional; prior efforts to “move the needle” on this topic did not have enough teeth to make it happen. It was with forethought and purpose that this cross-functional team was setup, and we hope each member’s association (and knowledge) will increase the power of this collective effort. This team was organized before COVID hit and will continue to be in place after COVID subsides. Although the team’s overall mission is to “advocate for and seek opportunities to improve access to reliable, affordable, high speed broadband internet..”, for the purposes of the ICG efforts, we have taken a laser focus on how access to broadband networks can reduce the impact of the pandemic, build back the Jefferson County economy and provide enhanced access to educational opportunities and health care.

**Please meet our team (steering committee are in bold):** Arlene Alen, Beau Young, Ben Bauermeister, **Bill Putney, Brian Kuh**, Cedar Knoll, **Cliff More**, David Olsen, Dan Toepper, Daniel Heaton, Deborah Stinson, Diane Jones, Frank DePalma, Gage Pacifera, **Gary Nelson, Gary Rowe**, Greg Brotherton, Heather Dudley Nollette, Jerry Wilson, Jeff Randall, **Karen Bennett, Ken Collins**, Kevin Streett, Leo Boyd, Maggie Kelley, Norm Norton, Pete Duncan, Rich Durr, Tamara Meredith, Tom Brotherton, Will O’Donnell

**SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

**These are the key issues related to Broadband:**

- Broadband network access is not available in all areas of Jefferson County. Even where access to Broadband is available, service is often unstable and frequently fails to meet minimum accepted standards.
- Lack of equitable access to effective broadband throughout county is frequently due to financial challenges. And, lack of equitable access in our county/cities versus other county/cities is due to big company profit targets.
- Lack of useful equipment in the home to receive broadband, even if service is available.
- Developing effective, affordable and reliable broadband service is not cheap, takes time, and is impacted by evolving technologies.
- Service providers focus on a business model for highest-density/highest-revenue communities and don’t need or want to take on the more rural, more isolated, least-profitable areas of Jefferson County.
- Federal and state support has, to-date, favored funding those same private companies (large internet service providers) who are reluctant to expand into the more difficult, less profitable areas. And prior federal support has gone to services like DSL or satellite that don’t meet current standards and future needs.

- Definitions of broadband vary; current language of 25 megabits-per-second (Mbps) down and 3 Mbps up are inadequate, and are often much slower than advertised.
- A survey of residents and businesses conducted by Jefferson PUD in 2019 indicated that 45% of residential responders have either no internet or only have access to slow speeds and outdated infrastructure such as DSL. Only 59% of businesses surveyed indicated they had high speed broadband (Broadband Infrastructure Expansion Plan, Magellan Advisors, 2019)
- Many estimates say that at least 25% of rural Americans don't have access to broadband with speeds of at least 25 Mbps down and 3Mbps up (Information Technology & Innovation Foundation, July 13, 2020).
- 24% of rural adults say access to high-speed internet is a major problem in the local community (Pew Research Center, September 2018).
- There has not been a comprehensive (statistically meaningful) survey of Jefferson County but there is every reason to believe that it would be somewhat similar to those two quotes, but not necessarily higher.

**Those known issues have been greatly exacerbated by COVID because:**

- Children are now having to attend school virtually; teachers having to teach school virtually, putting extreme pressure on the need for access to reliable, affordable broadband networks and the internet from home.
- Residents are working from home in numbers never seen and all signs suggest that even as COVID wanes, many workers will continue to work remotely.
- Most Jefferson County residents are experiencing some level of virtual health care.
- Local business has been hurt by COVID restrictions , inability to receive customers at full capacity, and are more reliant on on-line business, on-line ordering, on-line experiences. If the business, or the customer has no access to broadband, the business/economy is affected.
- Loss of, or reduction in employment due of the pandemic, makes broadband out of reach, financially, for families/workers.
- Per the Pew Research Center in April, "53% of Americans say the internet has been essential during the COVID-19 outbreak".
- From ITIF (Info Tech & Innovation Foundation) July 2020, "COVID-19 has exposed shortcomings that competitive networks do not adequately address. This should galvanize policymakers to address serious gaps in rural infrastructure, affordability for low-income users, and at-home access for students." In this same report, what was also expressed was that the urban networks fared well given the 20-40% uptick in home broadband use and not to change much in the urban areas in response to the pandemic.
- If we are unable to ensure that we have a system that provides widespread broadband services and lowers barrier so internet access which is so critical for our economic recovery and the mobility of our workers, Jefferson County's opportunities to grow our economy will be severely limited.

**Overview of recommended actions**

While access to broadband networks is a big topic, and solutions require time and money, we are making some recommendations for the immediate reduction of the impact of the pandemic, widening the breadth of those immediate actions to include more of Jefferson County, and we are also making recommendations that will take a bit longer but must still be done to ease pandemic pain, and to be prepared for future, similar crises.

In brief, we are making recommendations in these four areas:

1. **Implement short-term, interim, solutions to reduce the immediate impact of COVID:** We are recommending:
  - a. funding the continuation of the work the Connected Students Initiatives has done to put computers, portable hot spots, and monthly internet access services into the hands of families with children on the free & reduced lunch program,
  - b. like item 1.a above, approving funds to connect the last 10-20 homes of children on the free and reduced-lunch program, which are in the most rural and hard-to-reach areas.
  - c. that the circle of support, in the way of portable hot spots and internet services, is widened to include a broader low-income group of families/workers and make provisions to get them the access they need for work, school, and healthcare from home,
  - d. that funding be provided to extend the time limit for reduced-price monthly internet services that will expire in less than 12 months, and
  - e. continue the support for the PUD in placing WIFI hotspots throughout the County, in their immediate response to the pandemic.
2. **Bring immediate and lasting attention to reducing the impact of the pandemic:** Here, we are making two key recommendations:
  - a. to take cross-agency action and get a high response to the WA State Broadband Office speed survey to get Jefferson County the lasting and visible attention we need for state and federal support, while at the same time identifying un-and under-served areas, and
  - b. to increase the power/success behind the work to solve these broadband access problems by creating a new cross-agency (or interlocal) Broadband Council, only focused on this topic, for the immediate and longer term.
3. **Complete the plans for near- and long-term broadband expansion:** We recommend:
  - a. Ensuring 2.a above is done so that the results inform all plans,
  - b. that the Broadband Council (or ICG) collaborate with PUD in the completion of their broadband business plan,
  - c. that funding be made available for experienced engineers to estimate costs for building broadband access infrastructure for communities and/or entire county.,
  - d. that the Broadband Council and PUD identify 1-2 targeted pilot communities (un- and underserved, near fiber, feasible for immediate expansion, etc.) and make funds available to complete the engineering and business plans to make them “shovel-ready” (and grant-application-ready), and
  - e. similar to 3.d above, that the Broadband Council works with various wireless providers (cellular, radio, and low-earth orbiting satellite) to target 1-2 pilot communities making funds available to complete the engineering and business plans to make them also shovel- and grant-ready.
4. **Implement broadband access expansion solutions:** Here we recommend acting in the near-term to expand broadband network access to various communities, and to layout a long-term implementation plan to cover the rest of the County including:

- a. using information from previous steps, ensure that 1-3 community broadband expansion projects are completed in the next year, that exercise all the various steps, technologies, and skills to inform all future expansions, and
- b. Funding, and ensuring, the creation of a 5-year plan that completes (or substantially completes) the remainder of the County.

Within each of these areas of recommendations, we have also included the legislation necessary to enable a higher level of successful implementation.

**PROBLEM/OPPORTUNITY STATEMENTS:**

**1. Problem/Opportunity 1: Implement short-term, interim, solutions to reduce immediate negative impact of the COVID pandemic**

Support immediate-need solutions to enable broadband access to students, parents, and workers who, because of the pandemic, are being educated, working, or receiving healthcare attention from home. Emphasize solutions for un- and under-served, low-income and technologically challenged households.

- a. **Background:** Due to guidelines from shelter-in-place, to virtual-schooling, to temporarily closed business offices, our children, parents, and workers have had to find ways to continue their education and work from home (or alternate locations). We have also all probably experienced engaging in virtual medical care. Having one or more people in a household who need to use the internet for streaming purposes (participating in class, working via Zoom, speaking to health professionals in a live environment, etc.) has underscored the either complete lack of broadband availability in some parts of the county or the substandard capabilities of some existing broadband services.

**b. Recommended Actions**

- i. **Objectives/Desired Outcomes:** Immediately put services/hardware in the hands of families/workers, focusing on those in hard-to-serve areas, and in those whose low income prevents them from affording services. This may include solutions that are less than state goals but meet the immediate need. The goal is to immediately reduce the COVID-19 impact of needing to use broadband from home or an alternate location where either broadband does not exist, or the equipment/services to “fire up” access are not available.

The desired outcomes are 1) broadband services/equipment are provided to all low-income families/workers to connect to existing broadband networks and 2) where broadband networks themselves are not available creative solutions are found to make broadband available.

- ii. **Leading/Supporting Roles:** Connected Students Initiative, PUD, ISP, and other non-profits take the lead with local government agencies, state and federal policy makers and funders, and stakeholders in supporting roles.

iii. Proposed Action Steps:

1. Enable the 113 households with students on the “free and reduced lunch program” to have access to broadband and on-going internet services so that those students are able to attend school virtually. Approve funding to reimburse Connected Students Initiative for expenses related to the purchase of home-located “hot spots” (or other) equipment and one year of internet service fees.
  - a. Approve funds for the initial 55 households requested in the September 4<sup>th</sup> proposal [by 11/1/20]
    - i. [Previously approved] \$80,563 requested, \$18,918 previously approved by ICC/ICG
    - ii. September/October monthly service: approximately \$3,300
    - iii. Remaining 8 months of monthly service: \$13,200
  - b. Approve funds to reimburse Connected Students Initiatives for their work since the September 4<sup>th</sup> proposal, for an additional 58 households [11/1/20]:
    - i. Equipment: \$5,800
    - ii. September/October monthly service: \$3,480
    - iii. Remaining 10 months of service: \$17,400
  - c. Consider a placeholder for any new additions to the free and reduced lunch group as the effect of the pandemic continues to force new families into this group estimated at \$1,000-\$2,500 in equipment and \$3,600-\$9,000 in services (by December 31, 2020).
2. Approve funds for Connected Students Initiative and Internet Service Providers (i.e. North Olympic Peninsula Data Centers, StarLink, cellular providers) to implement broadband solutions, and provide the service/hardware for the last 10-20 most rural, hard-to-reach homes for households with students in the “free or reduced lunch” group [by 11/1/20].
  - a. ISP equipment: very rough guess of \$12,000
  - b. Household equipment: \$2,000
  - c. 12 months of service: \$7,200
3. Cross-reference the “free and reduced lunch” group from Connected Students Initiative with the low-income list from PUD to target and implement temporary broadband services and provide hardware to other low-income households, which could potentially be 610 households, using PUD counts. [by 12/31/20]:



- a. Household equipment: rough estimate \$61,000
  - b. 12 months of service: rough estimate \$219,600
  - c. ISP extension of internet into hard-to-reach areas: unknown at this time
4. Set a deadline to discuss and prepare for funding the extension of the services that Connected Students Initiative has put in place, that start to expire in less than 12 months, beginning May, 2021 [meet in early March, 2021, fund by mid-April, 2021].

Rough example: when all of the 113 households reduced price service expires, there costs will jump from nothing (because the average \$30 reduced-price monthly service is currently paid for them) to approximately \$80/month, if we assume no new negotiated price nor paid-by-others solution is found. At a minimum, any households whose prepaid service ends before the school year is out will need assistance to get them through the end of the school year

Having said that, there really is not an end to the need for a student to have access to the internet, to support their education needs/requirements, even after they go back to the classroom.

5. Continue the efforts to place WIFI antennas, where needed, in Jefferson County for drive-up access to the internet [timeframe tbd].
- a. [Previously approved] Equipment, cabling, labor for the first 13 WIFI hotspots: \$190,000 previously approved by ICC/ICG in September 4<sup>th</sup> proposal
  - b. Equipment, cabling, labor for additional WIFI locations [this estimate is unknown at the time of this report]

**c. Legislation Needed**

- i. Real and sustainable support is needed for low-income households to enable them to receive broadband service and equipment that they are not otherwise able to afford. Local grants, CARES funding, and charity are being used now to fund temporary solutions that will expire within 12 months. **Create and fund permanent solutions for low-income households to access broadband internet services, including ideas like vouchers (state of Alabama), negotiating fixed low-income pricing with service providers, etc.**
- ii. Once the pandemic “grace period” ends, ISPs that have reduced their monthly service fees for low income, will reinstitute pre-COVID rates which will be unaffordable for low income residents. Use the power of state and federal agencies/funding **to negotiate more permanent low-income rates with service providers.**
- iii. State Broadband Office (and Jefferson County) must have an **educational outreach** arm that is available to help residents learn how to get and use

broadband services and equipment. Provide support for **digital equity and inclusion legislation** that provides funding for training and skill-building, access to hardware and software, internet connectivity, digital media literacy, assistance in the adoption of information and communication technologies in low-income and underserved areas and populations, and development of locally relevant content and delivery of vital services and technology. ([HB 2414](#), 2020)

## 2. **Problem/Opportunity 2: Bring immediate and lasting attention to reducing the impact**

Actually making broadband available (especially during crises like this pandemic) to the un- and under-served, and close the equity divide so that low-income households and rural communities are not left out, will require the power and attention of a group not unlike the ICG. Jefferson County needs a longer-term intergovernmental (or interlocal) entity focused on this topic.

**Background:** Attention to the necessity of broadband for families, students, businesses/workers, healthcare, and the economy has exploded due to COVID-19. Efforts like this ICG/ICC is undertaking, have the potential to actually move the needle to bring about solutions. Prior to the pandemic, groups that did not have the full power/influence of elected officials, community leaders, lobbyists, etc., limped along making small progress. This pandemic is not over and the attention cannot wane. And, when it is over, the work will not be done. A strong organization who can build local and legislative partnerships, assess needs, understanding funding sources, set goals, assign responsibilities, hold people accountable is needed to ensure success in expanding broadband in Jefferson County.

There is work being done at the state level to improve broadband access. One way the state is judging where help is needed is via their survey response map on which Jefferson County has a low response rate. Getting “on the map” should be simple and is probably essential in moving forward. Some immediate state/federal relief may depend on it. Jefferson County needs to be on that map.

### a. **Recommended Actions**

- i. **Objectives/Desired Outcomes:** The best outcome is that Jefferson County has the attention of federal, state, and local agencies for both funding and inclusion in large-scale broadband solution negotiations, as well as in developing appropriate and reachable standards/equity. And, that a new intergovernmental Broadband Council be created and tasked with supporting successful outcomes.
- ii. **Leading/Supporting Roles:** Jefferson County, City of Port Townsend, Jefferson PUD, Port of Port Townsend, EDC Team Jefferson and JBAT to take the lead with support from federal policy makers and funders, broadband service providers, local businesses, and citizens
- iii. **Proposed Action Steps**

1. Immediately engage county residents and businesses to participate in the WA State Broadband Office survey of broadband access, so that the state's attention to Jefferson County is raised as a recipient of short- and long-term funding, solutions, and policies. The survey mechanism is already in place; the cost associated with the effort to get households to respond (akin to a "get out the vote" effort) is modest and should be absorbed by the City of Port Townsend, Jefferson County, the Port of Port Townsend and Jefferson PUD in activities already underway [starting now, and through December 31, 2020].
2. Create an interlocal broadband council to stay in place for at least three years at a minimum to do the following (council to be setup as soon as feasible):
  - a. Identify roles, responsibilities and limitations of local governments and organizations and create interlocal agreements to enable a collaborative effort to fund and build out broadband access.
  - b. Provide support/resources for planning and implementation of the council, including support for grant-writing, mapping, and related tasks.
  - c. Develop and/or expand regional, state, and federal partnerships.
  - d. Develop service provider partnerships and incentives.
  - e. Establish timelines, goals, and mechanisms to evaluate progress.
  - f. Ensure that broadband actions & services meet local, state, and federal goals for broadband services and digital equity
  - g. Develop the legislative agenda that supports broadband expansion.

**b. Legislation Needed**

- i. Adopt an **interlocal agreement to implement a local government Broadband Council that identifies** the team members, establishes roles and responsibilities, goals, timeframes, and funding commitments.

**3. Problem/Opportunity 3: Complete plans for near- and long-term broadband expansion**

Plan, and take the steps to be ready for medium and long-term solutions for Jefferson County.

- a. **Background:** For the last few years, each time a broadband expansion grant has been available, Jefferson County has not been in a position to apply for the grant. We don't have complete survey information, it is not explicitly clear where our un- and under-served areas are, we don't have the relationships with ISPs to collaborate on the grant request, and we don't have accurate estimates of costs and revenue potential.

Even in the timeframe during this pandemic, we could have acted on expanding broadband in some communities had we had the information and the relationships to move faster.

**b. Recommended Actions**

- i. Objectives/Desired Outcomes: The actions below should result in our being ready to find funding and start building out expanded broadband access networks in Jefferson County. These actions should also enable us to start small expansion projects in the near term.
- ii. Leading/Supporting Roles: Broadband Council, Jefferson PUD, broadband engineering companies, Internet Service Providers play leading roles with federal and state legislators, EDC Team Jefferson and JBAT support
- iii. Proposed Action Steps
  1. Complete item 2.b.iii.1 (see above) and have useful survey results at the ready to be used to get state/federal support and to target areas in need.
  2. Either have the ICG, or a new broadband interlocal council (from 2.b.iii.2 above), be an active partner with the PUD as they finish their broadband business plan helping to ensure that county-wide priorities and cost/benefit can be met, and to provide assistance with funding sources [starting now, through end of December, 2020].
  3. Fund, and engage with a group like GEO Partners to provide additional cost estimates for either community-specific or county-wide broadband implementation. Ensure both all-fiber and hybrid approaches are estimated. The cost for this could be less than \$15,000 and will give the us more confidence in other third-party estimates [by December 31, 2020].
  4. Using the power of a newly created interlocal council (from item 2.b.iii.2), appoint a team to collaborate with the PUD to create a near-term list of targeted communities, close to existing fiber where expansion can be feasible. Fund the micro-business plan (cost/revenue estimates, basic engineering design) for 1-2 pilot community buildouts. [cost estimate is tbd; timeframe for this step is November 2020-February 2021]
  5. Additionally, have the appointed teamwork with other wireless service providers for expansion into harder-to-reach neighborhoods (cellular, radio, and low-earth-orbiting-satellite). Fund the micro-business plan (cost/revenue estimates, basic engineering design) for 1-2 pilot community buildouts. [cost estimate is tbd; timeframe for this step is November 2020-February 2021]

**c. Legislation Needed**

- i. Retail ISP authority of last resort: **Change the WA state regulations that restrict public agencies from servings as a retail internet service provider.** Minimally, allow public agencies to be the retail provider “of last resort” when other internet service providers won’t deliver service in rural areas because of limited revenue potential.
- ii. Definition of broadband speed: The generally accepted current definition of broadband speed, of 25megabits per second on downloads and 3 megabits per second on uploads, is what has been and continues to be used as the measure of success for internet service providers. Not only is this measure no longer fast enough for today’s work, education, and healthcare needs, it is not even what many service providers are actually delivering, even after they have accepted grant money to do so. This current accepted standard is perhaps only 25% of the speed actually being delivered in most urban areas, even minor ones. Even the state of WA has these speeds as their 2024 goal for “all Washington businesses and residences”, growing to 150 megabits per second symmetrical (down and up) by 2028. **Rural areas will continue to be the last communities brought up to these broadband speed standards and by then, the rest of the US will be far ahead. These broadband speed goals are not aggressive enough. Grants for long-term infrastructure should only be awarded to those who are committed to meeting long-term (at least 10-year horizon) broadband speed goals, not just 2-3 year speed goals.**
- iii. Alternative criteria for grants: **Remove the restrictions on broadband grant and loan programs** that handcuff local government agencies and others, and that use criteria that only large-scale internet service providers can win when those are the same providers failing the rural, underserved, and low-income communities. If public agencies had more access to grant money, then open architecture (bullet number iv below can also become a reality).
- iv. Open architecture: An open broadband access network encourages an open market for services. Currently, when a large internet service provider brings fiber or coaxial cable to a community, that community is basically held captive by that provider and will only get the level of service that provider is willing to deliver. The provider won’t let any other provider onto the broadband access network it built. **It is time to incentivize and prioritize open broadband access network infrastructure.** Fund public agencies to create broadband access networks rather than ISP or joint ISP/public agency developed networks. Open architecture allows the customer to choose their internet service provider, and for any internet service provider to gain access to the infrastructure (fiber, etc.).

#### 4. Problem/Opportunity 4: Implement broadband access expansion solutions

Expand broadband network access in Jefferson County, with starting with smaller, identified shovel-ready pilot projects, and overall, for all of the County.

- a. **Background:** There are some communities in Jefferson County who have wired (fiber, coax) or wireless (radio, cellular hot spot, low earth orbiting satellite) broadband and internet access delivered by CenturyLink, Wave, North Olympic Peninsula Data Centers, Starlink, Marrowstone Wireless, T-Mobile, AT&T, Sprint, etc.). In those communities, there are success stories, and there are those that are just limping along with substandard capabilities. Expansion of broadband network access in Jefferson County has been done in small increments.

The pandemic has brought into broad focus that there continue to be many un- and under-served, along with those whose income does not allow them to participate.

Where communities are either 1) adjacent to existing fiber, 2) within range of an existing radio tower, 3) within range of a cellular fixed wireless broadband tower, or 4) within range of the new Starlink low earth orbiting satellites, we have opportunities to expand broadband network access in the nearer term. Doing so may mean we expand without “open architecture” (because these solutions mean using existing ISP-owned infrastructure) but could reduce pandemic pain earlier.

The larger, more comprehensive, all-county solution is a longer term venture; Washington’s goal is that 25Mbps up/3Mbps down by 2024, and then the higher 150 Mbps by 2028 – both many years away.

**b. Recommended Actions**

- i. **Objectives/Desired Outcomes:** Successful completion of the actions recommended in Problem/Opportunity 3 puts Jefferson County in “shovel-ready” position to build-out broadband access networks in a few pilot communities. The desired outcome of these next steps is to complete, and make broadband access services available in 2-3 Jefferson County pilot communities (preferably in the un- and underserved categories) within the coming 12 months and to use the information and skills gained to create a five-year plan, and accelerate future build-outs.
- ii. **Leading/Supporting Roles:** Jefferson PUD, Internet Service Providers, Broadband Council play leading roles with the support of federal and state legislators, community activists, EDC Team Jefferson, community organization (i.e. JBAT), businesses and residents
- iii. **Proposed Action Steps**
  - 1. Expand broadband, now, where we can [in the next 12-18 months]:
    - a. From the planning work done in items 3.b.iii.4 and 3.b.iii.5 above, build out at least 2-3 of these small expansions in the next year as pilot projects that can be models for larger build-outs. Exercise all of these steps:
      - i. Apply for grants and find other funding sources to fund the build-outs

- ii. Build relationships with infrastructure builders (PUD and/or others) and retail internet service providers who will complete the work and supply the on-going services in these communities
  - iii. Develop how-to guides for residents.
  - iv. Complete the builds and “light them up”.
2. Develop a 1-5 year plan to complete implementation in the remainder of the County [within the next 10 months].

**c. Legislation Needed**

- i. Alternative criteria for grants: [Repeated from 3.c.iii above] **Remove the restrictions on broadband grant and loan programs** that handcuff local government agencies, and that use criteria that only large-scale internet service providers can win when those are the same providers failing the rural, underserved, and low-income communities.

## APPENDIX B: ICG FORMATION AND COLLABORATION

### Brief Background and Objectives

In an effort to provide an inclusive and coordinated structure to catalyze immediate and sustained COVID recovery and greater community-wide resilience, the collective governing bodies of Jefferson County, the City of Port Townsend, the Port of Port Townsend and Jefferson County PUD formed the Intergovernmental Collaborative Group (ICG). The purpose of the ICG is to adopt a COVID-19 Recovery and Resiliency Plan that endorses community-based actions to better recover from the impacts of the pandemic, and build greater ability to weather future events. These actions should be specific projects and initiatives that are tangible, fundable, legal and able to be implemented in the near term. Projects and initiatives are meant to empower the community directly to support long-term resiliency with an emphasis on what individuals, organizations and businesses can do together, with an appropriate supportive role by local government to assist those community projects and initiatives.

To those ends and to expedite quick progress, the ICG has designated two representatives from each of the four organizations – one elected, one chief executive – as the Intergovernmental Coordinating Committee (ICC). The ICC will recommend a Recovery and Resiliency Plan to the ICG and provide a regular, monthly interface with the community. The ICC will consider strategies and actions brought forward by six community-based groups comprised of people with specific expertise and/or sector experience and representing different sectors for inclusion in the plan. The groups include: 1) Culture & Events, 2) Economy & Jobs, 3) Children & Families, 4) Human Services, 5) Food System Resiliency and 6) Broadband.

Those groups are meant to work quickly, collaboratively and constructively over 3-4 months to develop those tangible, fundable and legal actions that are able to be implemented in the near term. Proposals from each group will come to the ICC for consideration in October and may be incorporated into a plan ultimately adopted by the ICG in December 2020. Actions are meant to be short-term actions that build momentum and early success for issues that may require a subsequent set of longer-term solutions developed at a later stage.



Joint Resolution Establishing the Intergovernmental Collaborative Group (ICG)

**Jefferson County Resolution No. 36-20**  
**City of Port Townsend Resolution No. 20-036**  
**Port of Port Townsend Resolution No. \_\_\_\_-20**  
**Jefferson County Public Utility District Resolution No. 2020-\_\_\_\_\_**

**A JOINT RESOLUTION OF JEFFERSON COUNTY, THE CITY OF PORT TOWNSEND, THE PORT OF PORT TOWNSEND AND JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT #1, ESTABLISHING A MULTI-GOVERNMENTAL PROCESS FOR COLLABORATING ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COVID-19 RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, the community of Jefferson County faces a myriad of issues stemming from or exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic that are interrelated and involve community groups, individuals, businesses, non-profits and governmental entities; and

**WHEREAS**, Jefferson County is a political subdivision of the State of Washington formed in 1852 to provide general purpose governmental services throughout Jefferson County;

**WHEREAS**, the City of Port Townsend is a code city, incorporated in 1860, to provide general purpose governmental services within the city's limits;

**WHEREAS**, the Port of Port Townsend is a countywide special purpose district formed in 1924 to own and operate facilities including maritime, aviation, commercial and industrial facilities and is specifically charged with a mission of broad economic development throughout Jefferson County;

**WHEREAS**, Jefferson County Public Utility District Number 1 is a countywide special purpose district formed in 1939 to restore ownership of key public utilities to the people and currently owns and operates water, sewer and fiber optic utilities in parts of Jefferson County and provides electricity throughout Jefferson County;

**WHEREAS**, on February 29, 2020, Governor Jay Inslee signed a Proclamation declaring a State of Emergency exists in all counties in the State of Washington due to the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the State; and

**WHEREAS**, the long-term and sustainable response to and recovery from COVID-19 will require interjurisdictional partnership and collective action on a range of issues; and

**WHEREAS**, response and recovery from COVID-19 will also require sustained partnership and collective action on complex pre-existing issues exacerbated by the pandemic, including affordable housing, climate change and inequality; and

**WHEREAS**, setting the structure for empowering, harnessing and coordinating broad-based, community-wide engagement across sectors will be essential for sustained recovery and resilience; and

**WHEREAS**, Jefferson County, the City of Port Townsend, the Port of Port Townsend and the Jefferson County PUD desire to establish a formal process of intergovernmental collaboration to address COVID-19 recovery and resiliency efforts; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Jefferson County Board of Commissioners, City Council of the City of Port Townsend, the Port of Port Townsend and Jefferson County PUD as follows:

Section 1. Intergovernmental Collaborative Group (ICG). The collective governing bodies of Jefferson County, the City of Port Townsend, the Port of Port Townsend and Jefferson County PUD, when meeting jointly for the purposes outlined in this resolution shall form the ICG. The express purpose of the ICG is to adopt a COVID-19 Recovery and Resiliency Plan that includes specific projects and initiatives that are tangible, fundable, legal and able to be implemented in the near term. Projects and initiatives should empower the community directly to support long-term resiliency with an emphasis on what individuals, organizations and businesses can do together, with an appropriate supportive role by local government to assist those community projects and initiatives. It is anticipated that the ICG will meet a total of three times (including a kick-off meeting to adopt this Joint Resolution, and two meetings to review and adopt the proposed Recovery and Resiliency Plan).

Section 2. An Intergovernmental Coordinating Committee (ICC), comprised of two members of each of the four entities, including one elected member to be selected by the entity and the chief appointed officer of that entity, is formed for the purposes identified in this resolution. All meetings of the ICC will be subject to the Open Public Meetings Act, actions will be taken by consensus, meetings may be facilitated, meeting procedures may be established by the group, and actions will be limited to implementing the purpose of this resolution including recommending a Recovery and Resiliency Plan to the ICG. The ICC may work with community groups representing different sectors and shall consider community recovery and resiliency strategies and actions for potential inclusion in a draft consolidated Recovery and Resiliency Plan by the ICC. The ICC will recommend its draft COVID-19 Recovery and Resiliency Plan to the ICG for adoption. It is anticipated that the ICC will meet a total of six times.

Section 3. The ICC is charged with working with community-based groups which may represent the following sectors:

- A. Culture & Events
- B. Economy & Jobs
- C. Children & Families
- D. Human Services
- E. Food System Resiliency
- F. Broadband

The groups should be comprised of people from the community with specific expertise and/or experience in their sector. Groups may meet weekly or as often as they determine, and are invited to develop suggestions for specific projects or initiatives that are tangible, fundable, legal and able to be implemented that address recovery and resiliency within their sector in the near term. The ICC and ICG may consider ideas generated by the group, but are not required to do so. The ICC may choose to work with additional sector groups.

While individual members of the ICG, ICC, or governing body that is a member of the ICG, may attend meetings of one or more groups, at no time may multiple members attend that would create a quorum of the ICG, ICC or such governing body.

Section 4. The final recommendation for a COVID-19 Recovery and Resiliency Plan shall be completed no later than December 15, 2020.

Section 5. This Joint Resolution shall expire on December 31, 2020, unless extended by written amendment executed by all four jurisdictions.

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