



Community Disaster Resilience Planning Guide Resources

Working Together Community Acceptance

Gaining Community Acceptance
Political Support

Gaining Community Acceptance

The community needs to be involved throughout the project, to help ensure decisions that are made during the project have popular support:

- People have a chance to give feedback on specific resilience issues and share their ideas on possible solutions
- People are able to hear solutions that others offer and discuss these options

The more people are involved and the more creative the process, the more likely solutions will be acceptable for everyone. There are many pathways to reaching the project's goal. While most people support steps to deal with potential hazards facing the community, certain aspects of conducting community-based research may be stressful and may require significant input and community engagement.

Therefore, the first step is to consider how best to get community support as work progresses on the community becoming more disaster resilient.

Political Support

It is critical to have political support and direction for the project. In doing so it is important to consider the relationship of those involved in your project with local or regional government staff and elected officials. Given the importance of local issues to the work under the project, it may be better to involve these other staff and elected officials as work progresses. Alternatively involving elected officials with a Sponsoring Organization or Working Group established for the resilience project may be an effective option.

If Your Community is Incorporated

The first step to consider is whether your community is incorporated or not under the provincial or territorial legislation or under the *Indian Act*. In Canada, most small communities are not incorporated, but many are. Depending on where you live in Canada, if your community is incorporated it is probably incorporated as a village, town, parish, rural municipality, township or hamlet. There are many examples of small communities in Canada which are incorporated – from the tiny town (less than 200 residents) of Zeballos on the northern tip of Vancouver Island, to the rural municipality of Alexander, Manitoba (population 2, 978) on the eastern shores of Lake Winnipeg.

If your community is incorporated then meeting with the elected council can be an excellent starting point. An informal meeting with Council can enable you to inform them about the project and seek support in working towards achieving disaster resilience. Beyond Council support, the project will be more successful if a group of residents are involved who can provide valuable information and support.

Not Incorporated?

If your community is not incorporated then it is most likely included within some form of regional district with a larger area and small population. Unincorporated communities will have some form of elected officials and administrative staff. An informal meeting with elected officials is usually an excellent way of gaining support for this project.

The community's elected officials can support the work by recognizing the project at regular meetings of the unincorporated government. In addition your project will be more successful if a group of residents are involved who can provide information, advice and other necessary support.

This document also includes several suggestions for an incorporated or unincorporated community government to gain community support for developing a disaster resilience plan.

References

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