ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GOVERNMENTS

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Red Dirt Resiliency | 5 Practical Ways Your Community Can Get Started

Communities do not have to take on a major project to begin putting the Red Dirt Resiliency Plan into practice. **These practical first steps** can help local leaders improve everyday operations, prepare for disruptions and make more informed decisions about infrastructure and public resources.

1. Create a basic inventory of community assets

Make a list of municipal buildings, roads, water-system components, vehicles and major equipment. Record each asset's age, condition, maintenance history and expected replacement date.

- **An easy first step:** Start with the community's five or 10 most important assets rather than attempting a complete inventory immediately.
- **Why it helps:** This allows leaders to anticipate repairs, prioritize limited funds and address problems before they become expensive emergencies.
- **Plan connection:** Priority Action 9 (page 55) calls for municipal asset-management plans that connect maintenance needs, operational savings and capital budgeting.

2. Review emergency contacts and continuity plans

Identify the essential services your community must maintain during severe weather, power outages and other disruptions. Confirm who is responsible for each service and how departments, utilities and neighboring jurisdictions will communicate and share resources.

- **An easy first step:** Bring department leaders together to identify essential services, verify emergency contacts and document available backup resources, mutual-aid partners and alternative communication methods.
- **Why it helps:** Updated information and clearly assigned responsibilities can prevent confusion, improve coordination and help communities restore essential services more quickly.
- **Plan connection:** Priority Action 8 (page 54) calls for strengthening the continuity of critical public services, while the plan's emergency-management recommendations emphasize updated communication lists, mutual-aid coordination and resource sharing.

3. Measure energy use in municipal buildings

Collect recent electricity and natural-gas bills for city-owned facilities and compare usage and costs.

- **An easy first step:** Select one building, such as city hall, a fire station or a community center, and review 12 months of utility bills.
- **Why it helps:** Communities can identify unusually high energy use and consider manageable improvements such as LED lighting, thermostat controls, HVAC maintenance or weather sealing.
- **Plan connection:** Priority Action 7 (page 52) calls for energy benchmarking, building assessments and coordinated efficiency investments that can reduce operating costs.

4. Bring local planners and utility providers together

Establish regular communication between the community and its electric, water, wastewater and natural-gas providers.

- **An easy first step:** Schedule an annual coordination meeting to discuss future development, major upcoming projects and areas with limited infrastructure capacity.
- **Why it helps:** Early coordination can prevent unexpected infrastructure costs, service delays and development in locations where utilities are already strained.
- **Plan connection:** Priority Action 10 (page 56) recommends aligning land-use decisions with utility capacity and long-term infrastructure planning.

5. Add a resilience check to routine public projects

Before approving an infrastructure project consider whether practical design changes could reduce flooding, excessive heat, maintenance needs or future repair costs.

- **An easy first step:** Add a short resilience checklist to the community's existing project-review process. Ask whether the project could improve drainage, reduce unnecessary pavement, add shade or native landscaping, and better withstand severe weather.
- **Why it helps:** Considering these opportunities during the original planning and design process is often easier and less expensive than returning later to correct problems or repair repeated damage.
- **Plan connection:** Priority Actions 14, 16 and 17 (pages 65–71) recommend improved parking-lot design, practical green-infrastructure tools, better stormwater management and coordinated planning to reduce flood risk.