

# COMMUNITY ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

The majority of our lives are wrapped up in the private sector in some way. Our food, clothes, medicine, building materials, transportation, and other core livelihood functions are usually produced or provided by a range of businesses, which may also happen to employ us, our family, or our friends.

However, in an era of increasing forest fires, floods, and related impacts of climate change, local economies are continually being impacted by natural disasters. Similarly, the changing nature of rural economies including industrial downsizing and shifting policy environments around resource exploration are making long-term economic viability and growth unpredictable. Whether it is a mill closure, an earthquake, or the relocation of a neighbourhood anchor business, local economies need to be prepared for disruption.

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## OUR APPROACH

The SFU Faculty of Environment's Community Economic Resilience program engages with municipal and First Nations leaders, emergency managers, local non-profits, and the business community to provide planning and recovery support for economic disruption.

We believe in a few core principles:

1. Economic resilience should be strengths-based, building off of what is already in the community.
2. Economic development and economic resilience are symbiotic. They depend on each other and are enhanced by principles of environmental sustainability and social inclusion.
3. Economic resilience planning can be relatively inexpensive, and usually pays short-term dividends even in the absence of a disaster or disruption.
4. Everyone has a role to play. Planning should be a total community exercise.



## WHAT THE PROGRAM OFFERS

There are multiple offerings through the Community Economic Resilience Program including:

- **Workshops and seminars:** We assist partners in convening key stakeholders for workshops, roundtables, or other sessions to learn about principles and tools for economic resilience. The goal of these sessions is to increase awareness and commitment to economic resilience priorities in a community.
- **Planning and engagement:** We support key leaders in developing economic resilience plans for communities, and doing the appropriate outreach and engagement with the business community and local workforce.
- **Research and tool-kit development:** We engage in research of local economic resilience issues or challenges to help stakeholders better understand needs or circumstances. We also provide customized case studies, business continuity planning tools, and local economy resilience planning tool-kits to aid in preparation and mitigation activities.
- **Rapid response deployments:** We provide rapid response teams of practitioners to engage in immediate post-disaster support to local jurisdictions and business leaders for economic stabilization and recovery planning.

We also work with a network of practitioners, both internal and external to SFU, to whom we can make referrals for specific needs or types of engagements that go beyond our core offerings and activities.

## OUR LEAD PRACTITIONER

Jeremy Stone has more than 17 years of community economic development experience and over a decade of experience in economic recoveries following disasters. He has worked on various disaster recoveries including Hurricane Katrina, 9/11, the BP Oil Spill, Hurricane Harvey, the Marathassa Oil Spill, and the 2013 Colorado Floods. Jeremy has worked with numerous governments and organizations on issues of economic resilience and social justice, and teaches a variety of courses at SFU, UBC, and Tulane on social justice, sustainable development, and disaster resilience.



**Need more information?**

**Contact us!**

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