

# Cache

## Planning News

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# Public Communication

## Strategies and Tactics for ongoing communication

**C**ommunication and public outreach are integral to the overall health and well-being of all communities. Good public communication strategies allow us to inform, consult, involve, collaborate with, and empower residents. An effective public communication approach allows us to be accessible, provide timely information, be responsive and put resident's needs first. By building a relationship and becoming a trusted resource, communities are able to more effectively communicate during emergencies and crisis events, and better engage and include the public in the planning process (public hearings, visioning, general plans etc.) during more typical periods of time.

Below are some tips for building a communication channel for your community.

### Building Trust

- Be transparent and provide timely-information.
- Engage the public on platforms residents use (Facebook/ Twitter)
- Provide fast responses
- Field questions and concerns, and provide clear answers.

### Define your Strategy

- Intent
- Mission
- Vision
- Core Values

Defining these will help you know the reason(s) and ways you're engaging the public (informing them, consulting with them, involving them in the public process, collaborate with them, empower) It is likely at different times we will be at different places on this scale

### Stakeholder Engagement

When you begin to engage in robust public engagement it is likely that you are going discover that there are individuals that are

hostile, untrusting of the municipality (particularly if controversial items are being addressed). It is important to invite these people to the table, be willing to engage with them, be transparent, share what information you have, if there are things you don't know communicate that you don't know and commit to finding out and following up with them. Active engagement can bring these "adversaries" to your side, and turn them into advocates for the community and public processes. However, if you encounter "trolls" who do not want to be engaged and only want to drag you into the mud, the best thing to do is ignore them on social platforms.

### Go Ugly Early

If you have bad or "ugly" news to share, share it immediately. Bad news has a way of coming out, if you're caught lying about it, you've burnt any trust that you have built and will find yourself in a worse place than if you hadn't engaged at all.

### Top 10 Tips

1. Go Ugly First
2. Bad news doesn't get better with time
3. Shape the story where possible
4. Never say NO to an interview
5. Kill rumors fast
6. Have as few people as possible between whoever is doing public engagement and top of organization
7. Trust your gut
8. Whenever possible, go on the offensive
9. Build a network of assets
10. Take the good with the bad

### Products of successful engagement

- Faster release of information (during crisis)
- Greater community involvement (planning processes)
- Greater community engagement (town events)

## Resources

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### Economic Development

Typically rural economies are dominated by a single economic sector (such as farming, ranching, or mining) As diversified economies are more resistant to change and shocks there is a move to diversify rural economies, the following resources are beneficial for communities looking to expand their economic base:

-USDA (<https://www.usda.gov/topics/rural>) is dedicated to providing services to the nearly 60 million Americans living in rural places, by providing financial resources and support for rural communities, residents, and businesses, areas of focus for USDA include:

- Affordable Safe Housing
- Economic Development and Business Support
- Infrastructure Investment
- Rural Development Initiatives
- Financing Loans and Grants
- Publications and reports

GOED (Governor's Office of Economic Development) (<https://business.utah.gov/rural/>) works with businesses in Utah's Rural counties, providing resources and programs to sustain business and improve employment opportunities. The office collaborates with local governments and other development partners to support rural economic growth

A full list of resources available and best contacts is maintained at <https://sites.google.com/utah.gov/rural/resources> where they are constantly updated by the Rural Coordinating Council.

# Executive Order on Electronic Meetings

Governor Gary Herbert has issued an executive order on electronic meetings, what does it mean for us?



**G**overnor Gary Herbert has issued an Executive Order temporarily lifting many of the provisions of the **Open and Public Meetings Act** as a result the following changes apply to communities:

All communities are able to hold electronic meetings, even if the community has not adopted a resolution, rule, or ordinance governing the use of electronic meetings.

Communities that hold electronic meetings are **not required to:**

1. Post written notice at principle office of the public body or specified body, or at the building where the meeting is to be held
2. Post written notice at an anchor location.
3. Establish one or more anchor location for public meeting, at least one of which is in the building and political subdivision where the public body would normally meet if they were not holding an electronic meeting
4. Provide Space and facilities at an anchor location so that interested persons and public may physically attend and monitor the open portions of the meeting
5. If comments from the public will be accepted during the electronic meeting, provide space and facilities at an anchor location so that interested persons and the public may physically attend, monitor, and participate in the open portions of the meeting

Communities **must** still:

1. Provide a means by which the public may hear or observe, live, by audio or video transmission the open portions of the meeting
2. If comments from the public will be accepted during the electronic meeting provide a means by which interested persons and the public participating remotely may ask questions and make comments by electronic means
3. If the public body has not adopted a resolution, rule, or ordinance governing the use of electronic meetings do so as soon as practicable a resolution, rule or ordinance which may be adopted at an electronic meeting pursuant to this order

## Electronic Meeting Resources

- Zoom - Free for up to 100 participants, with a 40 minute time limit for group meetings. Provides Video Conferencing features
- FreeConferenceCall.com - Free registration, available 24/7 can host up to 1,000 callers. Each session is given own access number and code
- FacebookLive- Free, limited to followers, text comments can be submitted
- Skype-Free, may join as a guest or visitor without a skype account, can access data and video after meeting
- Google Hangouts - Free, requires gmail account, up to 25 people on video or audio chat, up to 150 in text



# Rural Resources

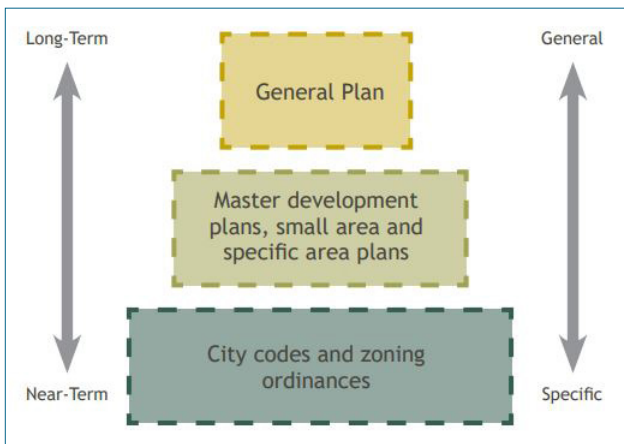
## A look at resources available to Rural Communities to assist with planning efforts

The Rural Coordinating Council (<https://sites.google.com/utah.gov/rural>) works to bring together the resources available to rural communities from over 25 State and Federal agencies. During the Utah APA Spring Conference I was able to get the 4-1-1 on a number of the resources available to rural communities (like those in Cache County). For additional information on any of the programs, or for assistance in accessing any of the resources please feel free to contact the Countywide Planner at (435) 755-1649 or [Taylor.Jensen@CacheCounty.org](mailto:Taylor.Jensen@CacheCounty.org) and I'll be happy to assist you.

### General Plan

Not only are General Plans required by Utah State Law, but they are integral in providing a community a vision for where they want to go. Describing a community's vision, and serving as a guide that the development code and other plans strive to implement. Planning Commissions and City Councils should be very familiar with their general plan, and reference it often when making legislative decisions.

As such an important document it is important that it



### General Plan's Relation to City Code

is done well, and a number of resources are available for communities of the valley including:

- Rural Planning Group (<http://ruralplanning.org/index.html>) Provides a General Planning guide for best practices, as well as a framework general plan that can be amended and edited to fit any communities needs
- Communities with populations under 1,000 that can't afford a consultant but want professional help may contact Michael Clay, a professor at BYU he and his students provide general plan assistance at cost (about 1/3 of the Cost of hiring a consultant)
- CIB – The Community Impact Board (CIB) will match up to \$50,000 to be used for a small planning grant. Cache County has used CIB grants to assist us in our General Plan update, and the Countywide Planning Department



can assist communities interested in filing for a CIB Grant. With grants funded every October, February, and June <https://jobs.utah.gov/housing/community/cib/index.html>

-Countywide Planning – The Countywide Planning office can help communities with grant applications, seeking consultants, or writing their own general plan updates, contact [Taylor.Jensen@CacheCounty.org](mailto:Taylor.Jensen@CacheCounty.org) with any questions or help requests.

### Historic Preservation

The Utah Division of State History (<https://history.utah.gov/>) has seven different arms that can assist local communities preserve their history, and historic buildings, among resources available are:

- A Matching grant of up to \$10,000 to enhance historic buildings.
- A no-cost architect to review and evaluate historic buildings, who will inform communities/building owners of what needs to be done to protect a historic structure.
- Hundreds of thousands of historic photos and historic documents

### Housing

Communities of the valley aren't immune from the housing crisis facing the state, luckily there are a number of resources that can be accessed to help rural communities address housing.

The Housing Community Development Division (<https://jobs.utah.gov/housing/>) has resources available including:

- Gants
- Loans
- Training and assistance.
- Information on homelessness
- Access to data and research
- Tools to help tenants find, landlords rent, and developers construct affordable housing

The Rural Community Assistance Corporation (<https://www.rcac.org/>) provides:

- Self-help grants for non-profits working on affordable housing.
- Assist communities with infrastructure projects including Rate studies, and loan compliance to make sure loans or bonds are being paid back correctly.

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