



# The Local Leader's Toolkit: A Strong Towns Response to Pandemic

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Featuring:

Charles Marohn of Strong Towns

# Leaders and Managers

## Leaders

- Have followers
- Responsibly break rules
- Encourage risk taking
- Sell a vision
- See opportunities

## Managers

- Have subordinates
- Administer guidelines
- Play it safe
- Sell a project
- See potential failure

# Three Phases



FIRST 60 DAYS



2 TO 12 MONTHS



ONE YEAR AND  
BEYOND

# Shift in Thinking (first 60 days)

Step Up

Orient Horizontal, Not Vertical

Be a Voice of Unity

Seize the Moment



A photograph showing a group of people, likely a food bank line, on a rainy day. They are wearing face masks and carrying shopping carts. One person in the foreground is wrapped in a black plastic poncho. The background shows a building and other people in the line.

## Immediate Response

- Get People Fed
- Get People Shelter
- Support the Public Health Response
- Connect Masks to Economic Recovery



# Immediate Response

- Provide People Space
- Go Easy on Enforcement
- Support Adaptation
- Collect Data
- Preserve Cash



**PARK  
CLOSED**



Sorry, we are  
*Closed*



# Shift in Thinking (2 to 12 months)



Recovery will not mean restoration.



You must work towards community self-sufficiency, fully knowing you won't get all the way there.



There is a tradeoff between growth and stability.



## Mid-Term Response

- Waive Home Occupation Restrictions
- Legalize Neighborhood Essential Services
- Kickstart Entrepreneurs
- Legalize Housing Adaptations
- Make Quick and Lean Investments in Biking and Walking





## Mid-Term Response

- End Parking Requirements
- Start Growing Food
- Thicken Civic Infrastructure
- Begin Reorienting Bureaucracies
- Change How You Measure Success







Preparing for State/Federal “Assistance”





# Local Priorities for Infrastructure Stimulus

- Prioritize maintenance over new capacity.
- Prioritize below-ground infrastructure over above-ground.
- Prioritize neighborhoods that are more than 75 years old.



# Shift in Thinking (beyond one year)



Rely on little bets, not transformational projects.



Emphasize resiliency, not simply efficiency.



Design to adapt to feedback.



Use bottom-up action, not top-down systems.



Conduct as much of life as possible at a personal scale.



Always do the math.



# Long-Term Response

- Focus on your downtown and an ecosystem of neighborhoods.
- Focus on neighborhood compatibility and not simply use.
- Focus on expanding housing opportunities.
- Focus on transportation as a means, not an end.





# Long-Term Response

- Focus on economic development with a gardening mentality.
- Focus on leveraging public spaces.
- Focus on your people.
- Focus on reducing debts and liabilities.



Strong Towns Community  
([community.strongtowns.org](https://community.strongtowns.org))



# Strong Towns Academy

- [academy.strongtowns.org](https://academy.strongtowns.org)
- Strong Towns 101 (FREE – available now)







academy.strongtowns.org

- Aligning Transportation with a Strong Towns Approach (Summer 2020)
- Creating Housing Opportunities in a Strong Town (Summer 2020)
- Making Capital Investments in a Strong Town (Fall 2020)
- Jobs, Growth, and Economic Development in a Strong Town (Fall 2020)
- Building Neighborhood Resiliency (Fall 2020)
- Doing Public Engagement that Matters (Winter 2021)
- Mobilizing Your Community to Become a Strong Town (Winter 2021)
- Urban Design Principles for a Strong Town (Winter 2021)



[strongtowns.org/toolkit](https://strongtowns.org/toolkit)

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