



CAMBRIDGE ECONOMIC RECOVERY TEAM

Enabling Economic Continuity and Resilience Post-Emergency

OUR PURPOSE

The Cambridge Economic Recovery Team's goal is to prepare and assist businesses in the City of Cambridge to survive disruption, whether through a small localized incident (e.g. a building fire) or large scale disaster (e.g. widespread flooding). The team works to ensure that the critical services local business offer community members are available soon after an emergency. This will not only enable citizens to utilize the services provided by the local business community, but allow employees to return to work and put their lives back together following disruption. The team will work closely with the following core stakeholders to prepare for an emergency and stabilize and preserve the local economy after such an event:

- Small Business Owners
- Cambridge Chamber of Commerce and Local Business Associations
- Economic Development Organizations
- Elected Officials

WHO WE ARE

The Cambridge Economic Recovery Team is comprised of staff from the Cambridge Community Development Department, as well as the Emergency Planning and Coordination Office of the Cambridge Fire Department. We are a resource for emergency preparedness information for businesses.

WHAT WE DO

- Meet regularly to discuss the status of emergency preparedness efforts in the City of Cambridge business community.
- Advocate for local businesses to engage in emergency preparedness planning.
- Organize business workshops to share emergency preparedness planning, local banking, and insurance information, as well as training and exercise opportunities.
- Regularly update the Preparedness Resources for Businesses website, which is a one-stop shop for emergency preparedness resources for businesses.
- Connect stakeholders with local banking and insurance contacts.

POST-EMERGENCY ROLE

The Cambridge Economic Recovery Team will work to ensure that small businesses are connected to additional assistance, particularly in terms of capital and technical assistance needs, during and after an emergency in the following ways:

- 1) Activate the Economic Recovery Team
 - Have a representative from the Economic Recovery Team serve at the City's Emergency Operations Center to facilitate communication between MEMA, the local government, and the business community.
- 2) Re-establish Effective Communication Lines
 - Serve as a conduit of accurate and reliable information between government and local businesses.

- Utilize various communication methods including a grassroots advertising campaign, a hotline, and social media.
 - Utilize the Emergency Preparedness for Businesses website to provide links to various business recovery resources.
 - Reach out to federal and state partners to serve as a conduit of information on business and economic damage.
- 3) Facilitate Financing Options
- Create one access point (a website or point of contact) for businesses to reference when seeking assistance with financing options. Ensure that loan terms and options are easily available and small business application processes and requirements are clear and located in one area.
- 4) Assess Current Organizational Capacity
- Identify sources of emergency grant money, such as the National Emergency Grants from the Department of Labor, to provide funds to pay for temporary staff.
 - Partner with local, regional, state, and federal economic development partners to help pool and expand resources.
- 5) Prioritize Business Damage Assessments
- Survey local businesses to collect information on ground-level damage and both direct and indirect impacts and capture information in a central database.

HISTORY OF THE TEAM

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), the regional planning agency serving 101 communities in the greater Boston area, and the City of Cambridge Community Development Department partnered in February 2015 to develop post-emergency business continuity and emergency preparedness strategies for small businesses in Cambridge. This work was funded by the District Local Technical Assistance program, which was created by the Massachusetts legislature to provide financial support for technical assistance planning efforts in cities and towns across the Commonwealth.

Small businesses are the backbone of a local economy, providing employment to residents, as well as essential services and goods such as groceries, gas, childcare, and health services. To help facilitate preparedness planning in the Cambridge business community and enable businesses to recover as soon as possible after an emergency, it was recommended through this project that the City establish an economic recovery team. Given that all businesses are vulnerable to both natural and man-made disasters, the team was established to help businesses prepare and make recovery plans to enable them to survive with minimal loss and/or disruption of productivity following an emergency.

For more information on the Cambridge Economic Recovery Team, please contact the City of Cambridge Community Development Department at 617-349-4637.