Planning for a Network of Resilience Hubs for Community Preparedness in Connecticut Workshop
Swift Factory (10 Love Lane, Hartford, CT)
April 30th, 10 am – 3 pm

On April 30th, 2025, the Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation (CIRCA) hosted a workshop focused on the topic of "resilience hubs" at the Swift Factory in Hartford, CT. The event was organized in collaboration with the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), and the North Hartford Partnership, and featured presentations, a panel discussion with community-based organizations, and an afternoon breakout session for attendees. Resilience hubs are loosely described as sites, buildings, and community spaces that can provide support to people before, during, and after extreme weather or climate hazard disruptions. The workshop was envisioned as an opportunity to hear more about and discuss the concept of resilience hubs and begin developing a community of practice to implement them in Connecticut. The following summary is provided as a record of the event and resource for attendees who are interested in collaborating on resilience hubs. To view the agenda, materials from the workshop and additional images, visit the Resilient Connecticut website here: Resilience Hub Workshop.

Morning Session Presentation Notes:

Welcome:
John Truscinski (CIRCA) welcomed everyone to the event.

Sarah Huang (DEEP) gave a brief introduction about the CIRCA-DEEP Climate & Equity Grant Program, which is providing funding for this workshop.

Opening Remarks:

John Truscinski (CIRCA) gave an overview of the concept of resilience hubs, highlighting three themes:

- *Escalating impacts of weather events:* Rain events, flooding, heat, disruption to people and infrastructure.
- *Capacity of government to respond to and manage these disruptions:* The ability of the federal government to help states is currently strained and the future capacity of federal support is uncertain. It's likely that the burden of managing natural hazards will continue to shift to local and state government.
- *Trust:* There is growing distrust in science, government, news, etc.

A resilience hub has the potential to serve at the intersection of these themes.

A resilience hub is a physical place that can become a site for focused attention, with people who are part of a community, where the foundation of the community is face-to-face connections between people. The facility can be made more resilient with back-up power supplies, renovations, etc. This hub can be a place where resources are distributed, help is provided for accessing other avenues for help

after a disaster, and in general can be a site for longer-term discussions of these questions. The hub can be a building block for increased community participation in building resilience.

One goal of this workshop is to bring together a community of practice around resilience hubs, start to build a consensus about what this looks like in Connecticut, what do we need to do in Connecticut to get this off the ground.

Presentation: Addressing Disaster Preparedness-Disparity in Connecticut: Cultivating trust and increasing resilience through effective and equitable risk communication

Speaker: Eleanor Shoreman-Ouimet, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, UConn DISASTER Team

Presentation Slides: Addressing Disaster Preparedness Disparity is Connecticut Presentation

Dr. Elle Shoreman Ouimet-(UCONN Anthropology) gave a presentation on her research into disaster preparedness in Connecticut. She has interviewed many emergency managers (many of whom are volunteers) as well as many residents of different CT communities to assess their perceptions of and trust in emergency management.

There have been over 35 major weather-related disasters in CT since 1980, many of which were in the last decade. Risks from weather events play out across a landscape of socioeconomic vulnerability, as Connecticut has significant populations living either below the poverty level or within the ALICE (Asset-Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) households just above the poverty line. Many small quintessential towns in CT (many of which have ALICE households) are relying on volunteers for emergency support, and many of these volunteers are aging. CT has one of the largest wealth gaps by race and ethnicity in the United States and ranks second in the nation for overall wealth inequality.

Elle's research looks at the ways in which CT responds to disasters, including studying the state response framework and gathering data on local emergency management.

- Connecticut's State Response Framework (SRF) by the CT Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) is the official state framework.
  - o This document notes that the majority of Emergency Management Directors (EMDs) are part-time with no staff support, and many of them are volunteers.
  - o This framework assumes that local EMDs will identify vulnerabilities before disaster occurs and will use their own resources and mutual aid before requesting assistance from the state.

- o Overall, the SRF assumes that effective preparedness begins at the local level, with the work of the volunteer, and includes communication and action responsibilities for the local EMDs.
- The DISASTER Research Group at UConn, led by Elle, has conducted additional research. (DISASTER stands for Designing Interdisciplinary Science And Strategies To Enhance Resilience)
  - o Conceptualizes the environment as three domains – the physical environment (environmental exposure, hazards, climate change), the structural environment (building, infrastructure), and the cultural environment (inequity, injustice). The transition from a hazard to a disaster is most likely to occur when vulnerability in these three domains overlaps.
  - o Environmental exposure, infrastructural risk, and inequity all contribute to vulnerability to disaster.
  - o Research team has identified areas vulnerable to hazards by looking at those three contributors to vulnerability. In 2022 the team conducted interviews with municipal EMDs and public works directors in Windham, Tolland, New London, and Middlesex counties, as well as a resident survey for assessing resident risk awareness, emergency preparedness, etc. In 2024, this effort was expanded to focus on Fairfield, Litchfield, Hartford, and New Haven Counties.
  - o Research has revealed a precarious system of emergency management consisting of largely volunteer, often over-extended, mostly aging male EMDs.
    - ▪ EMD survey results reveal a lack of resources and a lack of community knowledge about disaster preparedness.
    - ▪ Resident surveys revealed a disconnect between emergency preparedness/response and at-risk community members. Lots of self-awareness of marginalization, desire for more information about extreme weather. Lower-income individuals reported that their needs were largely not being met by EM services and felt a lack of trust, while wealthier residents were often over-estimating their community's preparedness.
  - o Resident surveys reveal the importance of person-to-person information.
  - o Quotes from surveys reveal disconnect between residents and EMDs.
  - o Emergency management "knickpoints": Cold War, 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, COVID, Sandy Hook, Winter Storm Alfred. Each of these events led to changes in emergency management and citizen understanding of disasters.
    - ▪ Doppler effect: Those residents who were in proximity to a disaster are far more likely to remember and take precautions going forward.
    - ▪ The number of events has been increasing, and most of the increases are due to weather-related patterns. The state volunteer base for EMDs has not kept pace with these changes.
  - o Takeaways: Increasing weather hazards, increasing socioeconomic vulnerability, inadequately supported state system of emergency response. Growing gap between preparedness and poverty.
  - o Recommendations: Disaster management policy and planning should recognize the role of extended families and social networks. Crisis communications should be initiated at the community level and dispersed through trusted community initiatives. Education

should be presented through trusted community institutions. Crisis responders should build relationships with community leaders at trusted institutions. Communications should be shared in multi-media forms and available for those for whom English is not a first language. Emergency management personnel should actively include more women and racially minoritized groups, and advertise these positions to a wider audience. More state funding should support all of these steps.

Keynote Presentation: COMMUNITY RESILIENCE HUB: Baltimore's Auxiliary Emergency Response Plan

Speaker: Erica Pinket, Climate and Resilience Planner, City of Baltimore

Presentation Slides: [Community Resilience Hub Presentation](#)

Erica Pinket (City of Baltimore) gave a presentation on Baltimore's Community Resilience Hubs. Baltimore is the first city to develop a community resilience hub program.

- The Community Resilience Hub Program in Baltimore is operated out of the Office of Sustainability, not the Office of Emergency Management. Resilience is viewed as a comprehensive function, not just for emergencies.
- The program partners with community organizations who have already earned trust and do community work on a day-to-day basis, to help them set up community resilience hubs at their sites. There is a range of sites and services. The city program helps with logistics and support.
- Examples of services: Charging stations, access to electricity for medical devices, refrigeration, clean water and hydration stations, access to first aid, diapers, and menstrual supplies, daytime shelter and cooling/warming areas with meals and activities, communications space for volunteers/staff, wifi access and community updates.

- Having pre-positioned hubs in a variety of locations improves the ability for people to access them.
- The personnel at the hubs are continually trained for first aid and offline communication.
  - New strategy for offline communication is for each hub to have a digital sign where EOCs can share messages through resilience hubs.
- Managing community misinformation is a significant task. The goal is for the hub to be the trusted source that people listen to.
- Tool kit for each hub: Resilience hub operations plan template, key contacts worksheets, emergency terms glossary, resilience services checklist, community partners worksheet, supply tracking sheet.
- The hubs meet every other month as a group.
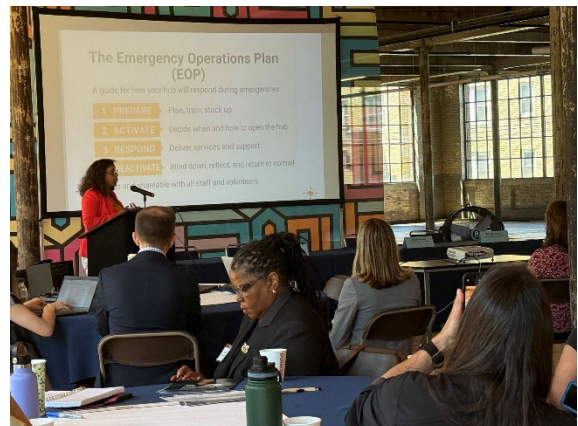
- Benefits of partnering with the city: the hubs can get opportunities for grants, connection to state, ongoing programs and training/workshops.
- The city is now implementing a capacity-based classification system for hub participation with four tiers. This allows organizations to adjust what they can offer based on their capacity, so they can still participate in the hub program at varying levels. The four tiers are as follows:
    1) Information hub
    2) Point of distribution for supplies (sandbags, etc.)
    3) MOU between hub and the city for a limited set of services
    4) All services offered – animal shelters, mass sheltering, nighttime access, partnering with EOC, etc.
- Erica is open to being contacted by other cities and states: erica.pinket@baltimorecity.gov

- Question from audience: What are you seeing down the road for funding challenges?
    o It's looking like there will be less funding from the CDC, less from the EPA, etc. But the state and mayor are very committed to the idea and are looking for all solutions. Corporate donors and philanthropic donors are options, but both are likely to be overtaxed as well. The program is trying to tap into as many networks as possible.
- Question from audience: Is the city underwriting the emergency management work that the hubs are doing?
    o No, each hub is responsible for their own volunteers in terms of liability. The city does review each hub's emergency management plan and approve it before the hub is activated.
- Question from audience: A key challenge in Boston is funding for the community organizations. How is this structured in Baltimore?
    o Baltimore does not directly offer funding to each organization, but will apply to grants on the behalf of community organizations to get them solar panels or other infrastructure improvements. The 4-tier system for hubs helps organizations tailor their participation to what they can do without too heavy a lift.
    o When organizations sign up, the city does a site visit to assess what the facility has, and integrates them into training program, etc.
- Question from audience: Do you get county support in addition to state support?
    o Baltimore City is actually more advanced than Baltimore County, so the County has actually looked to the City for insight. The two scales are now beginning to partner more.
- Question from audience: Can you share your strategies for combatting misinformation?
    o The public information officers from the EOC will give the city resilience hub program information, and the program will pass this to all the hubs, who then push this information out to the public. The general rule is "don't say anything other than what the EOCs are saying". The individual hubs also hear what people are saying, and can call the hub program to fact-check and then pass that back out to the community.

Panel Discussion with Leaders of Community-Based Organizations in Connecticut

Panel Members: Brenda Watson (North Hartford Partnership); Kathy Fay (Neighborhood Housing Services of New Haven); Maisa Tisdale (Mary and Eliza Freeman Center for History and Community)

Moderator: Stefanie Keohane (CT Green Bank)

1) Can you each tell us about your organizations the services you provide?
    a. Kathy: NHSNH has been around for 45 years, focused originally on supporting first-time home buyers. Now we have a community building and organizing team and a community organizing team, we work with people to make their homes more efficient and also help with residential stormwater management practices.
    b. Maisa: The Freeman Center began as a historic preservation organization in 2009 and the community effort to save historic homes from demolition in the South End of Bridgeport. The tie between historic preservationists and climate resilience goes back a long way, because historically most people have lived near water, so many historic monuments, resources, cultural assets are threatened by sea level rise. The South End of Bridgeport has low household incomes and significant flood risks. The questions of land use and who controls what gets built where are key here. In 2012 the Freeman Center began working more directly on resilience, and in 2014 was heavily involved in the Rebuild By Design project for Bridgeport.
    c. Brenda: The North Hartford Partnership runs three programs: 1) Ownership of three multi-family buildings to ensure there is local ownership of housing assets in North Hartford, with energy efficiency improvements; 2) Ownership and management of the Swift Factory, which was the only gold leaf factory in the country, and which took about 10 years and $35 million to restore; 3) Collaborating with community on a resident-led decarbonization effort to reduce energy burden and avoid climate gentrification.
2) What would a community resilience hub look to you and how did you first become interested in this idea?
    a. Kathy: First you have to think about where you're located. Even in New Haven, there are very different climate issues in different parts of New Haven. Some areas have sea walls and sea level rise is the issue. In other neighborhoods the concern might be an urban heat island effect. A hurricane might hit all over, but other climate issues might affect more micro-areas. A lot of housing doesn't have air conditioning, so the NHSNH is working on getting more cooling ability into homes so people can stay at home and stay cool. We're also working on heat pumps. The communications network is also a work in progress and is very important.
    b. Maisa: The Freeman Center has a very close relationship with the community, people regularly call up with different issues in the neighborhood. The Freeman Center was

involved in getting the coal power plant closed down, and stopping the siting of a very dense, very tall, all-rental housing development on a flood zone. Storytelling and communicating is a strength. The Freeman Center gets calls all the time from residents asking about different things, and can call different state agencies to get an answer or otherwise bring information. This in-between role and educator role is a strength of the humanities-based approach that the Freeman Center uses. Superstorm Sandy really brought home the need for dealing with flooding and flood mitigation. The Freeman Center and many South End Bridgeport residents were very involved in the Rebuild by Design project.

    c.   Brenda: NHP opened in 2020, and Brenda joined in 2023. Brenda's driving motivation includes a goal to dig into the organization's mission and over time eliminate energy burden and improve air quality, to improve the overall economic and health outcomes so that people in this community rely less on programs like energy assistance. Brenda grew up in this neighborhood and now has come back to work here. Last year there was a brief earthquake in CT, and Brenda reflected that if it had been longer or more severe, CT would not have been equipped to deal with it. There is an infrastructure desert in addition to a food desert and poor health access. In the case of the Chicago heat wave, the communities with higher social connections had higher survival rates, not because it wasn't as hot but because people were checking on each other. NHP is at the ground floor of conceptualizing a community resilience-climate-health-economic development hub.

    d.   Maisa: Bridgeport is also experiencing international developers buying up properties. In 2011, when it came time to remove the non-historic additions to some historic homes that were threatening their survival, the Freeman Center helped to put together a job training program where people learned green construction skills. Every thing that the Freeman Center does, they want to tell the story of the history so people know Bridgeport is a place to be proud of. Being rooted so deeply in civil society and community helps the Freeman Center to weather the storms of losing funding, and this is a contribution that already existing organizations can make to the work for climate resilience.

    e.   Kathy: A lot of cities have old sewage infrastructure that is combined with stormwater infrastructure. So even places that aren't directly threatened by sea level rise are faced with a potential health hazard because of raw sewage contaminating water sources. Community organizing around this issue in New Haven has helped to get the ball moving on addressing this, although there is a long way to go. Organizations need to work on a variety of concerns, since there are so many things that go into resilience. Also, the inability to pay utility costs is a driver of homelessness in our communities.

3) What sort of support is needed?

    a.   Kathy: We need a lot of support, and it's not clear if we will be able to get it from the state and certainly not from the federal government. Translating information into simple messages that are easy to share is key. Bringing in people with expertise on particular topics is important. CIRCA is a good resource but it needs to be connected to the community, and the hubs can be the connectors, but they need more support to do that.

b. Maisa: Capital investments in our communities are important. Bridgeport has the same issue with the combined sewer/stormwater systems, and during Sandy there was fecal matter spread through the neighborhood and into people's houses. The Freeman Center tends to need a lot of technical support – including financial projections for being more self-sufficient, information to incorporate into grant applications, etc. The Freeman Center has had a lot of support. It would be good to have a gathering to bring all these organizations together in one place. There is not really a mechanism for all these groups to come together collectively to share knowledge. Regional planning would also be helpful – this is something that government and universities do well.

c. Brenda: Many funders and state/federal governments have a flyover view of what's happening on the ground. In October 2024 the Swift Factory hosted a Sustainability Expo focused on reducing energy burden, and some of the feedback was that sustainability was not a concern for them, but crime and poverty was. There needs to be a way to tell the energy/environment story in a way that matters to everyday people – whether this is through asking how many people in your family have asthma, do you have mice in your house, etc. We also need the Inflation Reduction Act to be preserved. The amounts of money and time that it takes to get communities climate-ready is very substantial, particularly for communities that have previously been disinvested in. Money and messaging are the two big takeaways. We heard from Elle's research that EMDs want more people to be able to take care of themselves – people also want this for themselves. We need to create systems that allow people to be independent and also community centers where people can get assistance when they need it. The Swift Factory should not be the only asset in the community, because it will not be able to meet all the needs. All the other assets in the community – churches, senior centers, etc. – should organize together and with the Emergency Management Office to coordinate how they will work together.

d. Kathy: NHSNH has been doing resilience work for many years, but only started thinking about resilience hubs after talking to Brenda. This highlights the value of talking to each other, building these connections across the community of practice. The hub doesn't have to be one place, it can be a way to spark getting everyone else involved.

e. Maisa: We should all talk more often! The Freeman Center was drawn into the idea of being a resilience center because we were already doing the work under the name of historic preservation and then Dr. Mark Mitchell and others pointed out that the Center was actually also doing environmental justice and climate resilience work, and then the Rebuild by Design project also leveraged some of the work that the Freeman Center was doing. There were problems with communications during Sandy, and the Freeman Center was able to get a computer plugged into a landline. Much of the Freeman Center's work is about what happens in between the disasters, including safer siting practices, empowering the community to take part in decisions, making sure that the needs that will affect us in the future become part of our conversation and culture now. Freeman Center has been collecting community plans and photos from years back, which can be used to inform people and policy-makers. Our strength is taking information and turning it into stories that become a part of people's lives. We want people to be proactive and not reactive.

f. Brenda: Jimmy Carter put solar panels on the White House. What would the solar industry look like today if those panels had stayed there? We need to start doing the work today so we can protect tomorrow's future. Bad air does not have a zip code – what happens in Hartford impacts what happens on the shoreline, and the sea level rise on the shoreline affects Hartford through insurance changes, etc. We also need to improve the messaging around hubs so that potential donors can see the value of what we're trying to do.

g. Kathy: Echoes the point about insurance. NHSNH serves first-time homebuyers as one of our key services, and these homeowners later go on to be resources in their communities. There will be a talk on May 6th for homeowners about what sorts of insurance and resources are available to them, in partnership with Vanessa in the audience.

4) Audience Questions:

a. How much of the programming that your organizations work on could be aimed at youth education and empowerment for resilience work?

i. Brenda: Data collection could really use a reboot, to better identify the underlying causes, for example, of why someone came to the ER. The CT Data Collaborative has been holding data collection trainings for youth at the Swift Factory. Youth centered communication, storytelling, and data collection would be a valuable area.

ii. Maisa: The Freeman Center only has two staff so capacity is limited, but youth are involved in community advocacy, many of them are activists in nature and want to help their community. There are also locations where the Freeman Center has educational exhibits (community college, gallery). Staffing and money would help the Freeman Center expand these efforts.

iii. Kathy: NHSNH does not have any additional capacity to do youth projects, but paying attention to who is already working on this in your community and working with them or vouching for them is another way to advance these goals.

Breakout Session Summary:

During this part of the workshop, breakout groups moderated by CIRCA and DEEP staff discussed how climate-related disruptions are currently affecting their neighborhoods (both the neighborhoods where participants personally live and the communities that participant organizations serve) and what is needed to establish resilience hubs that can provide support before, during, and after emergencies. The discussion covered the types of weather and climate threats impacting Connecticut communities, the support that communities are likely to need in response to these events, desired characteristics and capabilities for an effective resilience hub, and the partnerships and outside support necessary to move these concepts into action.

1. Weather and Climate Disruptions Impacting Communities

Participants identified a variety of climate-related challenges that are affecting their communities, including extreme weather events, environmental health concerns, and social stressors that exacerbate

vulnerability. These issues require both infrastructural and community-based solutions. Participants also noted that risks are interpreted differently in different communities.

Flooding

- Stormwater flooding is a major issue, especially in urban areas. Increased precipitation leading to more frequent flooding events and overwhelming stormwater systems, resulting in the discharge of untreated or undertreated water into the environment.
- Mold growth and sewer backups in people's homes are common after floods in some communities.
- Limited investment in stormwater infrastructure and aging systems are persistent barriers.
- Increased flooding from stormwater surges along the coast (ex: Bridgeport).
- Flooding that affects interstate highways and major roads that cross state and or town boundaries and disrupt travel.
- Flooding impacting infrastructure (roadways/bridges). Funding to rebuild after a disaster doesn't typically allow for resilient construction.

Extreme Heat

- Many buildings lack air conditioning and backup power.
- Heat disproportionately affects older adults, children, and low-income residents.
- Urban Heat Island Effect → many contributing factors including shortage of tree cover due to resident hesitancy and lack of tree maintenance care capacity, utility removals of trees, high impervious surfaces.

Additional Disruptions

- Weather-related school closures impact education, food access, and childcare needs.
- Fallen trees leading to power outages make recovery and communication difficult during and after an event.
- Electrical surges.
- Extreme weather events (e.g., snow in April).
- Microburst Storms (e.g., hail).
- High winds: stronger and more frequent leading to crop damages and food insecurity.
- Tick-borne diseases and pesticide exposure compound environmental health concerns.
- Wildfires and smoke from other states have become more common, affecting air quality (ex: Lamentation Mountain wildfire).
- Prolonged drought conditions were reported to have dried up rivers and stressed agriculture, creating instability in local food systems and threatening farmer livelihoods.
- Potholes and damaged roadways occur after high rain and snow storms.

- Pollutants near high-risk zones/flood zones (ex: oil tanks in CT harbors leading to potential contamination).
- Disruption to water infrastructure (private wells).
- Warming oceans leading to disruptions in aquaculture and therefore, food insecurity.

Social and Economic Stressors
- Poverty and substandard housing increase vulnerability (e.g., locked or poorly maintained basements can hide signs of flooding, and residents may not have access to safe, cool spaces during extreme heat).
- Affordable housing loss and displacement from investor purchases are disrupting communities. One participant noted: "Without control of land, can't protect residents living there."
- Many residents cannot afford flood insurance or post-disaster repairs.
- Limited capacity for engagement. One participant noted: "People are overworked and do not have time to attend local meetings."

2. Support Needed Before, During, and After Emergencies
Participants discussed the full cycle of disaster support and emphasized the importance of planning and infrastructure, both physical and social. They noted the importance of clear communication, well-equipped facilities, and community trust to ensure effective response and recovery. Participants emphasized that preparedness must begin long before an emergency occurs.

Before a Disaster
- Consistent, accessible, understandable communication from trusted sources. However, be careful of communication overload.
- Public education campaigns (e.g., signage in art, digital billboards, social media via influencers).
- Disaster readiness training in schools and welcome packets for new residents.
- Infrastructure and facility upgrades should include resilience needs and improvements.
- Build trust and connections in communities through long-term outreach and engagement.
- Emphasis on keeping schools open.
- Work with community police to help convey the challenges of excess heat.

During a Disaster
Facilities may provide:
- Power charging and battery storage.

- Clean bathrooms and showers (ADA compliant).
- Medical and first aid kits.
- Comfortable, climate-controlled spaces.
- Food service and clean water.
- Emotional support, recreational programming, and child/youth activities, wellness programs to reduce trauma and provide a sense of normalcy.
- Communication with emergency departments.
- Nursing care, first aid, medication management.
- Reliable Wi-Fi.
- Overnight accommodations, which may not be possible in all buildings or by all organizations.

After a Disaster
- Assistance navigating insurance, mold remediation, and housing repairs.
- Trauma-informed mental health care, especially for youth and elders.
- Schools as critical partners for resource distribution and emotional support.
- Continued maintenance and upgrades to hub infrastructure.
- Coordination of volunteers and organizations.
- Mental health services.
- Debrief on what went well and where there is room for improvement, to be incorporated into plans moving forward.

Cross-Cutting Needs
- Community-led planning with NGO support.
- Peer-to-peer information sharing (e.g., fridge magnets, library, Google Docs).
- Accessible locations with flexible hours and multi-language support.
- Civic education on how to conduct effective outreach, tailor information to the target audience, combat any misinformation, use terminology that people understand and connect to.
- Connecting local capacity in building trades to assist community members with rebuilding projects and making their homes more resilient.
- Strong workforce to respond to natural disasters.
- Sustained funding.
- Technical assistance.
- Build resilience into ongoing opportunities and plans (POCDs, HMCAP).

3. Facility Requirements for Resilience Hubs

Participants provided a clear and detailed picture of the essential components of a resilience hub, ranging from basic amenities to social programming. Hubs need to accommodate babies to elders. Participants also raised logistical questions about operational timelines and accessibility. It was noted that not every hub may be able to meet every one of the criteria.

- ADA-compliant bathrooms and showers
- Kitchens, food storage (e.g., deep freezers, fridges), and meal service
- Backup power (solar storage), battery charging stations
- Air filtration
- Wi-Fi
- Hygiene and baby/pet supplies
- Translation services
- Medical and medication support, safe storage for medications
- Quiet spaces and recreation areas
- Multigenerational and culturally relevant programming (music, art programs)
- Security and vetting process
- Staff
- Storage for belongings
- Clean, dry, and safe environments post-disaster
- Public checklists of available services at each hub location
- Co-hosting capabilities (e.g., food pantries, pet friendly with crates and other animal supplies)
- Advertised hours of operation
- People with local knowledge
- "Mobile Hubs" – Hubs with some capacity to provide mobile services to those who cannot travel to the hub on their own

Key logistical consideration: How many days should a hub be prepared to operate continuously during an emergency? Three or more?

4. Key Partnerships for Planning and Operations

The successful operation of resilience hubs depends on collaborative planning and coordination among a wide range of partners as well as funding. Participants identified key roles for institutions, businesses, community groups, and trusted messengers.

Key partners include:
- Schools, teachers, administrators

- Public health and healthcare providers
- Faith-based organizations
- Civic leaders, elected officials
- EMS, Fire, Police, local emergency management directors
- Translators
- National Guard
- CT Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEHMS)
- American Red Cross
- Council of Governments for regional collaboration
- Youth and senior advocacy groups
- Local residents, grassroots leaders
- Community-led environmental justice organizations (further described by one participant as "people who know the struggles of low-income classes")
- Businesses: local banks, grocery stores, utility companies, corporate foundations
- Trusted communicators: social media influencers, local media, health workers
- Municipal staff who can provide support and oversight to an idea like this, such as directors of support/conversations and directors of resiliency
- Connections and examples from other places where resilience hubs have been established, like Baltimore

Support structures:
- Community benefit agreements
- State tax incentives and grants (e.g., EPA Brownfields)
- Legal, financial, and insurance assistance
- Community land trusts and funding for such land trusts
- Existing communication networks that effectively reach neighborhood residences
- Collaborations with community organizations that are already holding events that draw large crowds (e.g., jazz festivals)
- Resiliency plans
- Funding
- Local planning involvement: Participants suggested that people need to be involved in the city department of planning, including decisions about land use and transportation routes. Participants also suggested that planning needs to happen on a smaller community/neighborhood level, rather than city or town level. One participant suggested: "Let the community do their own planning or hire people to do planning visioning sessions."
- Connections to individual resilience initiatives (e.g., home food production)

5. External Assistance to Support Resilience Hubs

Participants voiced the need for outside technical and financial assistance from universities and nonprofit organizations in addition to state and local governments. They emphasized that hubs must remain locally led but can benefit from external expertise and adaptable support structures.

From institutions like UConn and partner NGOs, participants requested:
- Technical assistance: toolkits, guides, case studies
- Tabletop exercises and event simulation training for emergency response
- Financial resources for renovations and equipment
- Risk mapping and neighborhood-scale data; GIS based data that is accessible and understandable
- Capacity-building support for staff and leadership to provide resources needed for hubs
- Coordination support for getting local government to buy-in
- Coordination with utility companies
- Consistent support entity or point of contact for resilience hub planning
- Guidance on important stakeholders in each community – identifying who to talk to
- Research, evaluation, and flexible models—not one-size-fits-all approaches
- Grant writing assistance
- Coordination with state agencies and state political leaders (senators, representatives)
- Help with understanding how to partner with the American Red Cross and other entities
- Education and research about buried waterways and other hidden/historical vulnerabilities to sites and neighborhoods
- Report on pitfalls and challenges associated with establishing a resilience hub
- Support to move past just the identification of risks. One participant noted: "Many climate risks are already known; we need to discuss and eliminate obstacles (ex: money to buy and so the community can ensure that development is forward thinking.)"

Participants emphasized the need for hubs to be community-led and institution-supported, with flexibility to reflect local context and capacity. Sustained and accessible funding underpinned all conversations and was identified as necessary to establish a network of Resilience Hubs in Connecticut.

Next Steps:
This workshop was a first step in bringing together a community of practitioners from across the state to discuss the case for and potential of resilience hubs in Connecticut. Going forward CIRCA will continue to develop resources and look for collaborative opportunities to work with community-based organizations, local governments, emergency managers, state agencies and others to pursue resilience hub projects for Connecticut communities. If you're interested in hosting a workshop or develop a resilience hub project, please reach out to nicole.govert@uconn.edu or john.truscinski@uconn.edu.