ACSI - Resilience Hub Issue Brief

Introduction

Together, our human ancestors met adversity with innovation and cooperation over thousands of years; indeed, this is why we are still here today. They developed community structures to make it through lean times and respond to personal and collective hardship. Whether we're talking about an individual psychological trait or a community, there's a word to describe the ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change: resilience.[1]

Today, there's a lot of talk about the need to strengthen community resilience. With a rise in atmospheric carbon dioxide due to extraction and combustion of fossil fuels, the stable weather patterns we've come to rely upon during the holocene epoch are changing. This is resulting in an increase in the frequency and severity of storms, heat waves, floods, and wild fires – with more to come. Our homes, food systems, air quality, and weakening safety nets are all being challenged by these new trends. At the same time, systemic racial inequality persists and the wealth gap in America is wider than it's been in over 60 years,[2] making it much more challenging for some of us to access critical life-saving resources in emergencies. At this time, Multnomah County's mission is more important than ever.[3]

Defining a Resilience Hub

Resilience hubs are community-serving facilities augmented to support residents and coordinate resource distribution and services before, during, and after a major community disruption. Like the County's Schools Uniting Neighborhood (SUN) sites, they leverage established, trusted, and community-managed facilities as year-round neighborhood centers for community-building activities. Culturally-specific resilience hubs can play an especially important role in community well-being and ensuring equitable access to basic services. Resilience hubs have the potential to reduce burden on local emergency response teams, improve access to public health initiatives, foster greater community cohesion, and increase the effectiveness of community-centered institutions and programs. **See the Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN) Resilience hubs white paper for more information**

Services that may be offered:

Resilience (anytime)	During an emergency	Recovery

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[1] https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/resilience

[2] https://apps.urban.org/features/wealth-inequality-charts/

[3] "To improve the well-being of those in Multnomah County by providing accessible, high-quality, and innovative public services that create stability, enhance opportunities, and reduce disparities."
https://multco.us/info/multnomah-countys-mission-vision-and-values

Resource referral Language/form completion assistance Classes in financial literacy, GED, language, health, emotional support, etc. Mutual aid network	Shelter Medical aid Clean air/cooling/heat Food Locating loved ones	Grief support Paperwork - applying for relief Navigating loans

Context & Need

Communities of color and lower income communities suffer disproportionate impacts of climate change and yet are often the last communities to receive help in the event of an emergency. This is especially true of elderly, isolated, and/or members of the disability community. These communities also generally have less access to resources to respond and recover. Gathered through a national survey, the Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN) shared that residents in neighborhoods most vulnerable to climate change identified the following vulnerabilities in times of emergency: (1) lack of access to resources to react and respond in a hazard event; (2) lack of financial means to purchase backup food and water supplies; (3) little or no access to a vehicle to evacuate and dependence on unreliable transit systems; and (4) no out of area contacts of family members.

Equitable community resilience requires identifying vulnerabilities like these, bridging gaps in advance of emergencies and prioritizing assistance to those who experience greater risk to their homes, their jobs, their communities, and their health. Developing a resilience hub is an opportunity to enhance or create a physical space that becomes an even stronger cultural node of connection than what currently exists. and works to dismantle historic inequities and their root causes.

In community conversations about how to back-up strained emergency response services, and likely infrastructure failure during increasingly frequent extreme weather events, Multnomah County residents and community-based organizations have identified the need for a trusted location within their neighborhood where residents can access resources, materials and support year-round; while also increasing community and personal adaptive capacity. Instead of being *led* by local government, they are intended to be *supported* by local government and other partners but led and managed by community members, community-based organizations, and/or faith-based groups.

Concept Development

The resilience hub concept has been developed from local experience in cities across the U.S., including Oʻahu, Detroit, Washington DC and Baltimore. Historically, the focus of community

revitalization has been the development of new economic centers and housing opportunities. That method often emphasizes partnerships between city government and developers and leads to unintended outcomes like gentrification. Centering community revitalization around the core concept of resilience can move power into the hands of residents, local businesses, and community-based organizations without leading to displacement. Co-designing and supporting culturally-specific resilience hubs can help shift power from local government to residents and community-based organizations within a specific neighborhood or set of neighborhoods.

Hubs can increase community adaptive capacity and resilience by providing residents with direct management and access to resources at sites they identify as well-trusted and well-utilized in their community (e.g. schools, community centers, faith-based organizations, recreation centers). They provide trusted locations for residents to gather and gain access to resources year-round while also providing opportunities for local governments and partners to coordinate around climate adaptation, home energy retrofits, community-building, and public services through one neighborhood communication point.

Recognizing the value of resilience hub infrastructure for emergency management, in 2023 the Oregon Legislature passed HB 3409 to establish a grant program for resilience hubs and networks.[4]

> *The original intent of this Legislation was to combat environmental justice issues affecting people in Oregon, and to provide resources to communities disproportionately impacted by climate change.*
>
> - **Resilience hubs** *are locations in the community that are a part of the community's daily life, serving community members each day as well as during emergency response and recovery efforts.*

Leveraging Existing Sites in Multnomah County

Fortunately, there are already dozens of sites that serve as nodes of community connection, and a number of partnerships that provide basic services to members of underserved communities. Most of these sites lack critical infrastructure to remain operational in the event of an earthquake or if the electric grid goes down (photovoltaics, energy islanding, generators) but there has been some progress made to improve indoor air quality during smoke events, provide air conditioned spaces, remain serviceable after an earthquake, and serve the community in other ways during adverse events.
- Multnomah County funds 85+ SUN Community Schools in six school districts as full-service neighborhood hubs where the school and partners from across the

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[4] https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/emergency-management/pages/resilience-grants.aspx

community come together to make sure families have what they need to be successful.[5] These programs are operated by seven partners. All of these sites connect community members with energy, housing, and other basic assistance. Some of the sites include health clinics and also offer exercise programs for all ages. Many of the schools are also [Basic Earthquake Emergency Communication Node sites](#). There are some valid concerns to work through regarding opening schools to people not connected through students. [See report.](#)

- [20+ Library Branches/Sites](#) offer classes, computer access, services and support, including some that offer extended hours for cooling during heat events.
- [County Health Clinics & Centers](#) offer a wide range of health services to community members, including in school centers for students in districts across the County.
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Community Members and Community-Based Organizations

The resilience hub model relies on community leaders and CBOs to identify potential locations, manage sites, support the sites in an event of an emergency, and continue to work with local partners and the local government to enhance site function. Additionally, community partners can lead the project through active guidance on gaps and needs and by collaborating with county staff and external partners on all aspects of the project.

See below for a draft list of resilience hub programs being developed by community partners.

Case Study: Kijani Collective's Black Resilience Hub Network

The Kijani Collective is a Black-led coalition advancing climate resilience through a comprehensive action plan that centers community governance, economic empowerment, and environmental justice. Their initiative to establish a network of Black-specific resilience hubs demonstrates how community-based organizations can lead the development of transformative resilience infrastructure.

Kijani's approach operates through four interconnected committees: Policy Advocacy builds training programs to mobilize community participation in climate policy and utility regulation; Resilience Hubs identifies, upgrades, and connects Black-serving sites with energy efficiency, solar and storage, and smart controls; Ecosystem maintains a directory of Black-owned

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[5] https://multco.us/programs/sun-community-schools

climate businesses and connects innovators with market pathways; and Voice Amplification runs multimedia campaigns sharing lived experiences and broadcasting progress.

Their five- to ten-year vision includes a network of weatherized, upgraded facilities equipped with solar PV and battery storage, installed and maintained by Black-owned businesses. These hubs would provide education, healing, and mental health support, community building, and emergency services during climate events and grid outages. Community members would access services via an interactive map with educational story modules and receive training in policy advocacy to secure enabling policies and investments.

Kijani is conducting two foundational research studies: a Black Innovation Pathways Study that maps barriers for entrepreneurs in the climate solutions ecosystem, and a Black Community Needs Assessment & Resource Map that defines resilience through the perspectives of Black residents and creates interactive mapping tools. These studies will produce matrices of resilience hub sites, including readiness assessments, directories of business support, and barrier analyses with recommended interventions.

The initiative culminates in a Black Community Smart Grid Pilot that would integrate solar retrofits, smart grid technology, energy credit sharing, workforce development, and community governance. This phased pilot includes planning and trust-building, technical design, installation with workforce training, operations and monitoring, and policy recommendations for scale-up. Kijani seeks partnerships with utilities, the Public Utility Commission, funders, and site hosts to deliver this community-governed model that transforms Portland's approach to environmental justice and economic empowerment.

For more information: partnerships@kijanicollective.org or www.kijanicollective.org

Private and Non-Profit Partners

Private partners can provide much needed capacity and support for resilience hubs. Many of the best community centers and capacity building organizations are owned and managed by non-profits or institutions that focus on developing more equitable and sustainable communities. A strong private partner can provide potential sites, supplies, staffing support, job creation and training support, funding support, or act as the primary implementation partner. Example partners can include:

- **Job Training and Skill Development Centers:** Community colleges, trade unions, and work source centers can provide apprenticeships, pre-professional training opportunities, special skill development opportunities, and skill development for

formerly incarcerated individuals with a specific focus on preparing community members for part and full-time positions within their neighborhood or municipality.

- **Energy and Weatherization Organizations:** These groups can provide direct support to schools, churches, community centers, small businesses and residents interested in retrofitting their buildings to become more energy efficient. These organizations can help with education, outreach, and often with simple measures to make a resilience hub more efficient and effective. Examples include: Energy Trust of Oregon, Earth Advantage, Bonneville Environmental Foundation, Portland Clean Energy Fund etc.
- **Institutions:** Institutions often play a key role in supporting communities and neighborhoods. They often provide additional capacity, expertise, and efficiency in community resilience-building. Institutions can include hospitals, large businesses, and military groups.

Local Government

Strong relationships and trust among community leaders and local government can greatly increase the likelihood of community buy-in and support. A number of agencies work hard to develop and sustain relationships. Departments/Partners that are important to involve in development may include:

- **Departments of Human Services and Houseless Services:** Provide a wide range of essential economic and social services, including energy assistance, weatherization and housing stability supports.
- **Health Department:** Health officials can connect resilience hubs to health preparedness initiatives, public health programs and initiatives, and existing efforts in focus neighborhoods.
- **Emergency Management:** Hubs are likely to reduce the burden on emergency response teams and non-emergency calls since residents will have a place to go to access resources in the event of an emergency. Emergency Management can provide connection to police, fire and other community support services such as Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT). CERT Training at Resilience Hubs would be fruitful for staff/volunteers that work at these hubs.
- **Sustainability:** Sustainability departments typically play a connector role for local agencies as well as partners and neighborhoods. They are also typically the lead for initiatives around local food, green infrastructure, and climate change and facilitate grant writing.
- **Public Works/Facilities**: Critical for ensuring continuity of operations for public services and sites, as well as consideration of expanding use of existing sites to serve larger community functions including resilience hubs.
- **Housing Organizations:** Provide a connection to senior housing, public housing, or other potential locations that could provide on site resilience measures.
- **Transportation Department:** It is important to connect with transportation teams who can identify priority roads for clearing snow and/or debris around resilience hub locations so that external partners can easily access and support the sites in the event of an emergency.

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Advisory Committee

Developing an Advisory Committee that includes many of the key county departments, CBO's and private institutions listed above can provide stronger support for the development of a resilience hub and aid in identification of how Hubs can better coordinate mitigation and adaptation efforts in a way that increases the resiliency of neighborhoods and residents and reduces the burden on city agencies.

Critical Physical Infrastructure

To serve as a resilience hub, a community-serving facility will generally require a series of upgrades to ensure that the facility meets the daily needs identified by community members all the time, while also being able to provide critical services in the event of a disruption, often including:

- Staffing
- Seismic safety
- Food, tools, resources, and sometimes shelter
- Water/wastewater
- Information, communication infrastructure (fixed wire or mobile), internet, and a trusted set of "Hub managers" to streamline information sharing
- Logistical coordination with partner groups that provide aid and post-disruption support
- Access to basic health and medical supplies; refrigeration for medicine
- Access to electricity, heating/ and cooling, air filtration
- Hybrid Resilience System (HyRS) – Energy an electric generation and storage system that combines different technologies to enhance reliability and resilience, particularly in the context of power outages.[6]

	Blue Sky	Smoke/Fire	Heat	Winter Storm	Disease	Earthquake
Advanced Air Filtration/ HVAC		x	x	x	x	x
Energy/Batt	x		x	x		x

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[6] https://resilience-hub.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/USDN_ResilienceHubTech_Final.pdf

ery Backup/cell charging						
BEECN/Radio				x		x
Resilience Information Sharing	x	x	x	x	x	x
Refrigerator				x		x
Water/Sanitation				x		x
Tools/equipment distribution	x	x			x	x
Shelter			x	x		
Food	x	x	x	x	x	x

Next Steps

1. Create a checklist of essential physical and social infrastructure characteristics of a a viable hub
2. What's already on the ground, meeting some of those characteristics?
   a. Assess the status of each existing community and/or resilience hub in priority communities:
      i. What characteristics are in place?
      ii. Whom does it serve? Demographics
      iii. Who is staffing it? Hours staffed each week?
      iv. Who are the partners? and in their opinion→
         1. What upgrades are needed? What is the cost of the upgrade?
   b. Survey additional existing spaces that are currently underutilized, determine what physical and social infrastructure attributes would be needed to bring them online:
      i. County facilities
      ii. Other public spaces
      iii. Spaces managed by CBOs
3. What's missing?

a.   Where are hubs missing (in a geographical sense)?

Who is missing a hub (in a culturally-specific sense)?

Resilience hub networks around the U.S.

Detroit has several resilience hubs, searchable on a map. Kresge Foundation report.
Houston dedicated for facilities as resilience hubs in 2023
New Orleans
Miami-Dade Report(2023) about resilience hubs in multiple cities

DRAFT - List of Community Led Resilience Projects / Sites

Project Description / Goal	Partners Involved	Project Scope	Focus Areas (Drop Down)	Other Focus Areas	Funding Sources (If known/any)	Status / Notes	Links
East County Homeless Services Center (Cook Plaza Resilience Hub)	Multnomah County, East County Resilience Network	Physical Site	Community Space, Energy Resilience, Heating/Cooling/Disaster Shelter, Mutual Aid, Services Hub	Homeless Services	Multnomah County General Fund	Building pod village with shared kitchen/bath services; office space day center; 2nd floor reserved for severe weather sheltering; study done with architect around resilience features	
SUN Schools	MultCo	Physical Sites	After school enrichment, food, shelter, and help with energy bills,	Adult skills (English/computer classes, Zumba) mental health, family activities	Multnomah County General Fund	85+ school-based sites serving families with K-12 students	SUN Schools
Kijani Collective	NWX, Black Educational Achievement Movement & North 2 the Numbers Coalition, Black Futures Farm	Both	Energy Resilience, Food Security, Green Infrastructure, Heating/Cooling/Disaster Shelter, Mutual Aid, Services Hub		Seeding Justice, Meyer Memorial Trust	Currently developing research questions ahead of a resource mapping study intended to produce a report and infographic that will inform gap analysis, culturally specific sevices development, and hub establishment in future.	https://www.kijanicollective.org

Woody Guthrie Place Resilience Hub	Rose CDC, Thrive East PDX (Formerly East Portland Resilience Coalition (EPRC))	Both	Green Infrastructure, Mutual Aid		PCEF planning grant in the past.	JR Lilly, Gayle Palmer, and Morgin Carpenter are some key contacts. Vision team.	
Centennial Community Resilience Network (CCRN) Centennial Commons	Rosewood Initiative, Centennial Community Association (CCA), Black Economic Collective, Centennial Neighborhood Emergency Team (NET), Division Midway Alliance (DMA). Guerreras Latinas, Play Grow Learn, Outgrowing Hunger, Rockwood Common, Somali Oregon Service Center, Growing Gardens, Rooted in Nature Health Care, Centennial School District	Both				Karen Wolfgang & Morgin Carpenter. centennialcommunityassociation@gmail.com	https://centennialcommons.info/resilience-hub/

82nd Ave Corridor Dream Center	AYCO, APANO Birds Alliance of Oregon, Dharma Rain Zen Center, Meals on Wheels	Both	Community Space, Services Hub, Mutual Aid, Food Security, Green Infrastructure, Workforce, Energy Resilience, Heating/Cooling/Disaster Shelter	-"UPLIFT": Youth & Education Services -"BRIDGE": Community Health & Development	https://aycoworld.org/organization-development/	APANO and AYCO were planning on working on the behavioral health component of resiliency at their new location in the Jade District. A number of organizations–are all exploring the development of climate resilience hubs in the 82nd Avenue corridor. APANO/AYCO are focusing on the Jade District, Birds Alliance and Dharma Rain in the McDaniel hub, and Meals on Wheels on their 82nd Avenue property.	
Unite Oregon HQ on 122nd	Unite	Both					
Friendly House		Physical Site	Community space, classes, food security, resource referral+		https://fhpdx.org		
PCC Basic Needs Hubs	Portland Community College, Oregon Food Bank,	Physical Site	Food Security, Mutual Aid, Services Hub	Housing Security, Transportation access	PCC Student Activity Fee, General Fund for some positions, many donor orgs (e.g. Target)	One on each campus, also hosts events open to public (e.g. Free Food Market)	https://www.pcc.edu/basic-needs/
PCC Learning Gardens	Portland Community College	Physical Site	Food Security, Green Infrastructure, Community Space		PCC General Fund	One on each campus	https://www.pcc.edu/sustainability/initiatives/learning-gardens/

PCC Resiliency Committee	Portland Community College	Community Network	Energy Resilience, Food Security, Green Infrastructure, Heating/Cooling/Disaster Shelter, Mutual Aid, Services Hub		PCC General Fund	Helps guide holistic approach - weaving in various efforts at PCC from Emergency Preparedness, Learning Gardens, Bee Campus & Tree Campus certifications, Basic Needs Hubs etc. in support of Climate Action Plan goals	
East County Resilience Network		Both					https://multco.us/news/community-resilience-initiative https://sites.google.com/view/weallrisemultcosustainability/home?authuser=0
St. Johns Center for Opportunity (SJCO) Climate Resilience Grant							https://www.stjohnsopportunity.org/climate-resiliency-grant
Columbia Grange		Both 37493 NE Grange Hall Rd. Corbett, OR 97019	Food pantry, mutual aid network, classes, Information	Biochar kiln!		Corbett Area Newsletter: corbettareanewsline@gmail.com.	https://www.columbiagrange267.org/resources-1
Community Energy Project						Wonderful org, but not a hub or network	
Latino Network		Community Network	Runs SUN schools+ more				
IRCO		Community Network	Runs SUN schools+ more				

Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church	Depave	Physical Site 4927 NE 55th Ave, Portland, OR 97218	In development: Solar, storage, hvac,		PCEF	Jean Norwood.... ask John. Mercury article	https://www.streetroots.org/news/2024/07/05/morning-star-church-breaks-ground-community-resiliency-project
Luther Memorial Lutheran Church - Northeast Emergency Food Program	Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon	Physical Site 4800 NE 72nd Ave. Portland, OR 97218	Food Pantry, clothing, books	In development: community resilience space energy+		Building purchased in January 2025. In service since 2007	https://emo-nefp.org/our-services-2/
Potential - Berry Ranch	Rose CDC	New Physical Site 11110 SE Powell Blvd Portland, OR 97266				This is a brand new apartment complex with a large community room and teaching kitchen with potential to serve as a resilience hub. Candice Rose candice@rosecdc.org	
211Info		Information Clearinghouse	Everything from Food to Disaster Relief			This is the best local source of information and it should be updated when programs change	