

Resilient Connecticut: A Regional and Watershed Based Approach to Climate Adaptation Planning in New Haven and Fairfield Counties

A partnership of the University of Connecticut and the State Agencies Fostering Resilience Council (SAFR) as part the HUD National Disaster Resilience Competition

What is Resilient Connecticut?

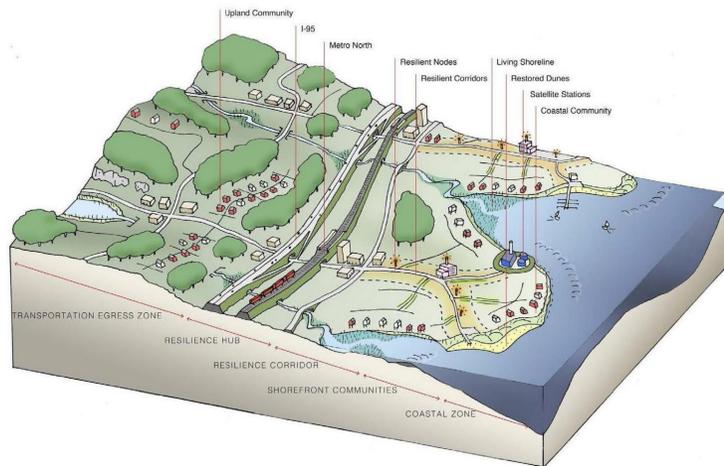
CIRCA, in coordination with state agencies, regional councils of governments (COGs) and municipalities, has initiated Resilient Connecticut (previously the Connecticut Connections Coastal Resilience Plan), as part of Phase II of the HUD National Disaster Resilience Competition. Resilient Connecticut will provide the state with a regional and watershed-based climate adaptation planning framework piloted in the Superstorm Sandy impacted regions of New Haven and Fairfield Counties.

The project will include a combination of new climate adaptation plan development, as well as, updates to existing plans, including recommendations on incorporating climate change into the State Plan of Conservation and Development and State Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Resilient Connecticut will also generate recommendations for a Statewide Resilience Roadmap that includes regional resilience and adaptation planning, policy consideration, and actionable priorities. In addition, science-based regional risk assessments will inform the development of implementation plans for regional to municipal to site scale pilot projects. Resilient Connecticut's guiding principle is to establish resilient communities through smart planning that incorporates economic development framed around resilient transit-oriented development, conservation strategies, and critical infrastructure improvements.

Resilient Connecticut Vision

Create a regional coastal resilience plan for Fairfield and New Haven Counties to establish resilient coastal communities where structures and critical infrastructure in the flood zone are adapted to withstand occasional flooding and protected by healthy buffering ecosystems, where critical services, infrastructure and transport hubs, are located on safer, higher ground, and where strong connections exist between the two. Increasing investment in identified Resilience Zones provides an opportunity to increase economic resilience by strongly tying back to the regional transportation network and regional economic opportunities.



Contact CIRCA

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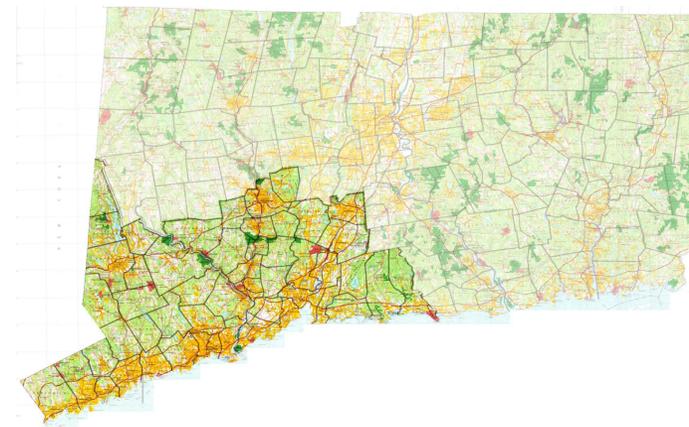
CIRCA staff contact information:

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Project Goals & Objectives

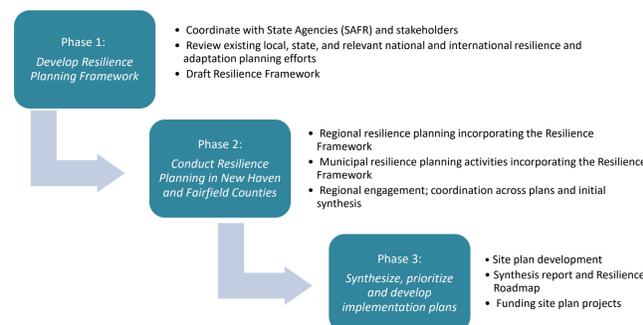
Resilient Connecticut has several overarching objectives to achieve this vision:

1. Increase coordination and collaboration between state and local governments, regional Councils of Governments, NGOs, utilities, business communities, and residents to integrate climate adaptation strategies across political boundaries and leverage cross jurisdictional investments.
2. Develop plans for New Haven and Fairfield Counties that will guide adaptation strategies and projects going forward; learning from and building on previous and ongoing adaptation planning efforts to create a planning framework that moves Connecticut forward.
3. Leverage CIRCA and UConn technical support and research on key questions related to climate adaptation - develop and demonstrate new modeling approaches and create tools and data that will support planning in Connecticut and beyond.
4. Provide recommendations for a Connecticut Statewide Resilience Roadmap to help advance the capacity of a broad multidisciplinary community of practice in Connecticut. The following topics will be emphasized: state and local policy; resilient transit oriented economic development; innovative planning, design, and engineering approaches; science and research; communication and stakeholder engagement.



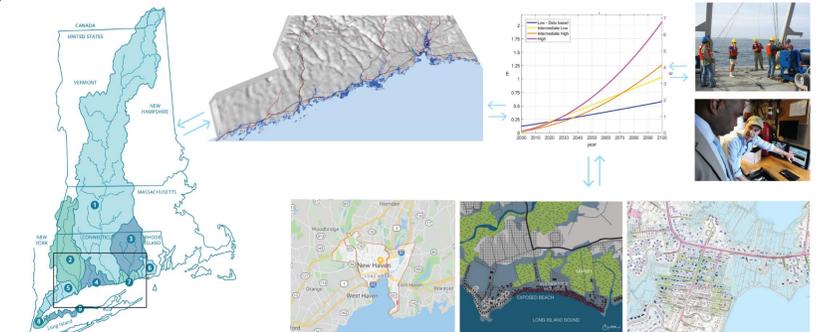
Schedule and Scope

Resilient Connecticut will feature 3 project phases beginning in Fall 2018 extending until Spring of 2022, and will include a number activities:



The information gathering and planning activities in Phase 2 will be guided by the Framework developed in Phase 1. We anticipate the Framework will involve work at neighborhood, town, and regional scales, and that it will consider the vulnerability of all infrastructure systems with the goal of the development of multi-scale strategies for resilience in Phase 3.

CIRCA Technical Supporting Activities



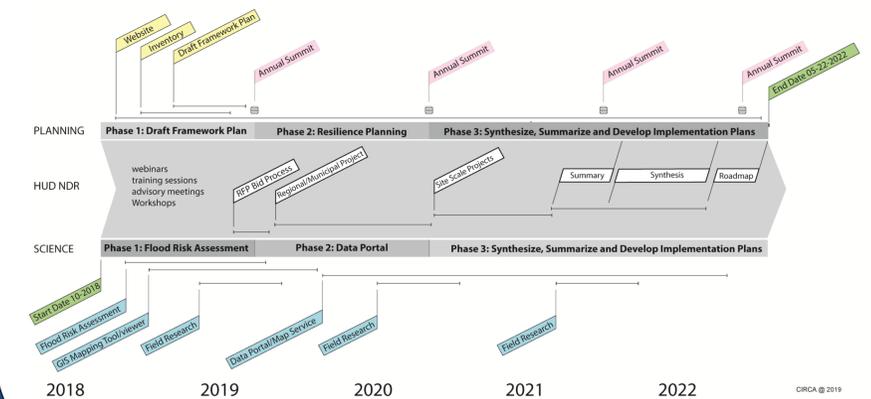
The Resilient Connecticut CIRCA project team will support the planning process through a series of technical supporting activities including; *flood risk assessment*, *adaptation option evaluation*, and *capacity building*.

Supporting Activities

- A. *Flood risk assessment*: applied research efforts to develop flooding vulnerability assessments that are informed by climate change science
- B. *Adaptation option evaluation*: The use of simulation for the evaluation of the effectiveness of adaptation strategies in the plans identified as high priority;
- C. *Capacity-building activities*: Applied research projects led by UConn faculty in the areas of economic risk modeling, legal analysis and characterization of vulnerable populations.

Engagement

In addition to engagement activities targeted at establishing local and regional resilience needs and priorities, broader engagement activities will be conducted throughout the project period. The audience will include a wide range of stakeholders including staff of state agencies, regional councils of government, and municipalities; elected officials; planning & zoning and wetlands commissions; and engineers and environmental consultants.



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