

Partners for Places Project Lessons Report

Project Name: *New Bedford Resilience Hub and Community Alert System Pilot Project*

- **Year Complete:** 2021
- **Local Government:** City of New Bedford, MA
- **Local Foundation:** The Island Foundation

Project Purpose

To evaluate the feasibility of creating Resilience Hubs in two New Bedford communities, identify a community-based organization to lead each, and create business plans for funding.

Key Lessons Learned

Lessons learned about tools and tactics that other sustainability directors could use to advance their work

Flexibility and perseverance are the most important tools with resilience work. Working on two resilience hubs in two different communities added substantial challenges. The projects did not stay on parallel tracks and diverged in scope and timing. This required flexibility to develop framework documents that were consistent with USDN guidance while maintaining the uniqueness of each Hub's plan. The team ended up taking a different approach by first defining need, then identifying a location. While struggling to define a vision for each community hub, locations emerged. One location is an existing community center, and one is an abandoned theater that the community development partner was looking to purchase and redevelop. This pivot in process was frustrating for the team because it felt like starting over. In the end, it was worth the time and effort because we were also able to identify other funding sources to enhance the project and our consultant provided additional pro-bono services to round everything out.

Lessons learned for develop collaborative relationships with a local place-based funder

Although the City has worked with this partner in the past, this project truly strengthened the relationship through participation in several other efforts of mutual benefit. The team was able to bring in additional resources to enhance this project work as well as partner on another project that dovetails with this work. The team plans to continue to work together to support funding and progress on these and other activities.

Additional Information and Resources

Learn more about the progress of the Capital Theater Resilience Hub project [here](#). Additional information on the NB Resilient plan is [here](#).