



Seattle Office of  
Emergency Management



# REGIONAL CATASTROPHIC PREPAREDNESS GRANT PROJECT FOR RESILIENCE HUBS

City of Seattle Office of Emergency Management on behalf of  
the Puget Sound

SPRING 2026



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project has benefited from the contributions of a wide range of staff, partner organizations, and community members. Their time, expertise, and collaboration were essential to advancing the resilience hubs effort across the Puget Sound.

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## Regional Catastrophic Planning Team

Thank you to participating staff from emergency management departments from cities and counties throughout the Puget Sound region that make up the Regional Catastrophic Planning Team. The Regional Catastrophic Planning Team includes representatives from the Seattle Office of Emergency Management; county emergency management departments in Snohomish, King, Pierce, Thurston, Mason, Kitsap, and Island counties; the cities of Bellevue, Renton, Bainbridge Island, Everett, Olympia, and Tacoma; the Tulalip Tribes; the Pacific Northwest Economic Region; the Washington Emergency Management Division; and FEMA Region 10.

## City of Seattle Departments

Thank you to participating staff and departments at the City of Seattle, including the Office of Emergency Management, Seattle Public Utilities, Department of Human Services, Department of Construction and Inspections, Department of Human Resources, Office of Housing, and the Office of Sustainability and Environment.

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# PROJECT BACKGROUND

Each year, floods, wildfires, and extreme heat disrupt communities across Western Washington. The region also faces longer-horizon threats from volcanoes and earthquakes that could be catastrophic. The difference between disruption and devastation often comes down to how ready a community is before disaster strikes. Past catastrophic planning has focused heavily on government agencies and the private sector.

The **Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant (RCPG) Resilience Hubs** pilot project took a different approach: listening to and learning from frontline Puget Sound communities about what they need most to stay safe and connected before, during, and after a disaster. The project focused on building local capacity through emergency preparedness and resilience hub planning while centering community knowledge, relationships, and leadership.

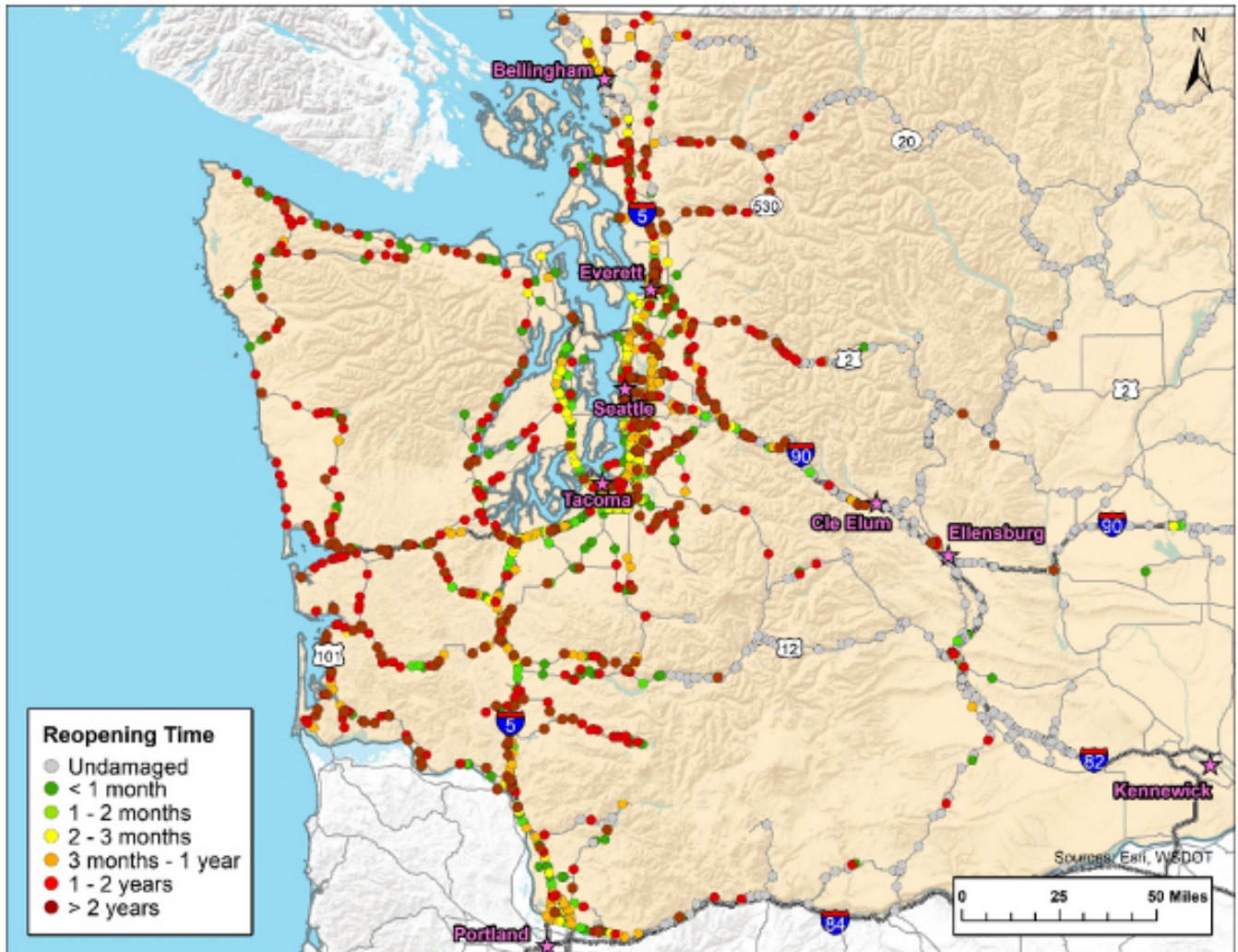
The project ran for three and a half years, from 2022 to 2026, through the City of Seattle's Office of Emergency Management (OEM) with a partnership agreement with the City of Tacoma's Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability. The pilot project worked within the RCPG planning region, including Islandd, King, Kitsap, Mason, Pierce, Skagit, Snohomish, and Thurston counties.

## Puget Sound's Earthquake Risk

The Puget Sound region sits above two major earthquake sources: the Cascadia Subduction Zone (CSZ) and the Seattle Fault Line. The CSZ runs parallel to the entire Puget Sound region and coastal Washington and can produce an earthquake of magnitude 8 or 9 on the Richter scale. The Seattle Fault Line runs east-west through the middle of Seattle and along a part of Interstate 90, west of the Cascade Mountains. This fault is also a great threat to the Puget Sound region along with the Cascadia Subduction Zone because of its type and location. If large enough, an earthquake from either of these fault lines would result in a catastrophic event for the region and potentially trigger secondary disasters such as tsunamis, landslides, and infrastructure failures. A CSZ megathrust earthquake, the largest type of earthquake, could affect the entire west coast, from Canada to California.

An earthquake could leave the region isolated due to a combination of geographic and infrastructure vulnerabilities. Numerous Puget Sound cities and communities, including Seattle and Tacoma, are heavily dependent on bridges, elevated roads, and waterways. Many will not be functional or may be destroyed after a strong earthquake from the Seattle Fault (7.2 or higher on the Richter scale) or CSZ (9.0 or higher on the Richter scale). Every single one of our 190 state-owned bridges and overpasses in Seattle, and thousands statewide, are expected to be impassable for at least two weeks (Figure 1), and damage to the region's major north-south corridors, like Interstates 5 and 405, will drastically interfere with the delivery of life-sustaining supplies and emergency response services.

Figure 1. Western Washington road closures post-catastrophic earthquake.<sup>1</sup>



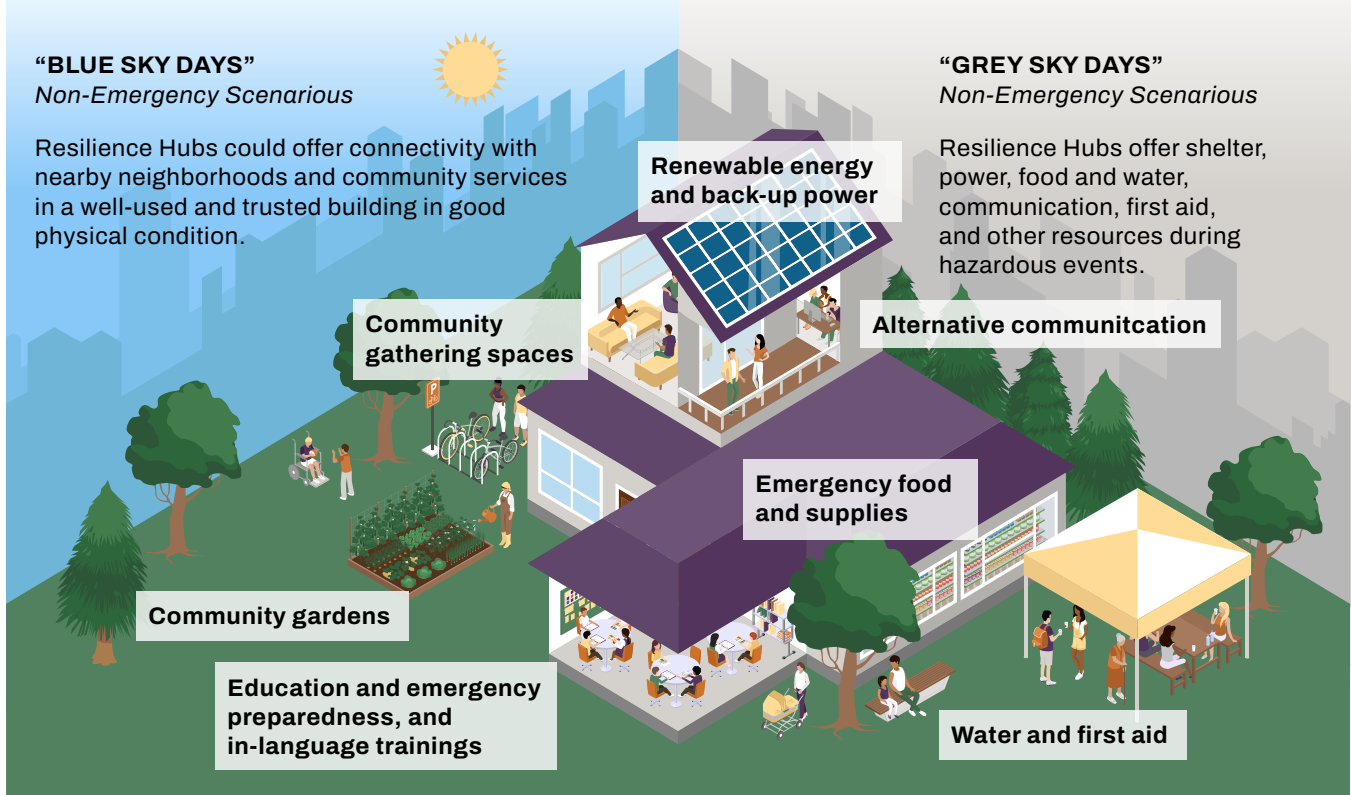
## Why Resilience Hubs?

In times of disruption, communities often turn to trusted spaces for information, resources, and support. These spaces take many forms, and each one reflects the unique character, strengths, and priorities of its community. They may be community-based and cultural spaces such as community centers, cultural or ethnic organizations for example. They may also be outdoor spaces that communities know well and rely on, such as public parks, plazas, town squares, schoolyards, community gardens, farmers markets, or culturally significant Tribal lands. What unites these spaces is not their structure, but the trust built through consistent presence, shared experience, and community care.

<sup>1</sup> Crow, C., & Schmit, L. (2022). Turning islands into bridges: Community-based response after a catastrophic earthquake. *Journal of Business Continuity & Emergency Planning*.

Figure 2. Resilience Hubs Infographic.

**Resilience hubs** are often community-centered, trusted gathering spaces where people already come together in everyday life and will likely return during times of crisis. They serve immediate and surrounding communities by providing access to services, programs, resources, and opportunities tailored to local priorities.



## Frontline Communities

Not all communities face disaster equally. Across the Puget Sound region, hazard exposure and access to preparedness resources are unevenly distributed. Low-income households, communities of color, seniors, and people with disabilities often face the greatest risks from the impacts of extreme hazards and have the fewest resources to prepare for and recover from them. These disparities are not accidental. Decades of underinvestment have increased these communities’ exposure to environmental hazards more broadly and have limited their access to resources and services.

**Frontline communities** include groups of people who face the greatest risks from the impacts of extreme hazards. They face compounding barriers: limited financial resources, distance from emergency medical services, language access needs, and higher exposure to place-based hazards. As climate change intensifies and earthquake risk remains significant, these conditions persist and even worsen.

Resilience hubs can reduce the disproportionate impacts of disasters on frontline communities while helping build the social infrastructure that sustains neighborhoods year-round on a multitude of topics, not only during emergencies.

# COMMUNITY-LED ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

The RCPG project team partnered with 14 community organizations serving frontline communities across the 8-county region. Mini grants gave these Community Partners dedicated funding through mini grants to lead emergency planning and engagement for the communities they serve. Together, the project team and Community Partners identified top hazards, supported preparedness outreach, created localized emergency plans, and assessed trusted spaces where residents naturally gather in times of need.

The project also built partnerships across jurisdictions and agencies. It also highlighted the importance of leveraging partnerships among jurisdictions and agencies to achieve project goals in addition to forming connections with Community Partners. Regional collaborators included emergency management departments in Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish counties, and the cities of Seattle and Tacoma. City of Seattle department partners included the Seattle Department of Transportation, Seattle City Light, and Seattle Public Utilities.

## Community Partners

Each Community Partner designed and led engagement activities, shaped by the languages, cultures, and priorities of the communities they serve. Summaries of their work appear in *Community Partner Engagement: What we heard*, while you can find an overview of the organization and a map of where they are located in [Figure 3](#).

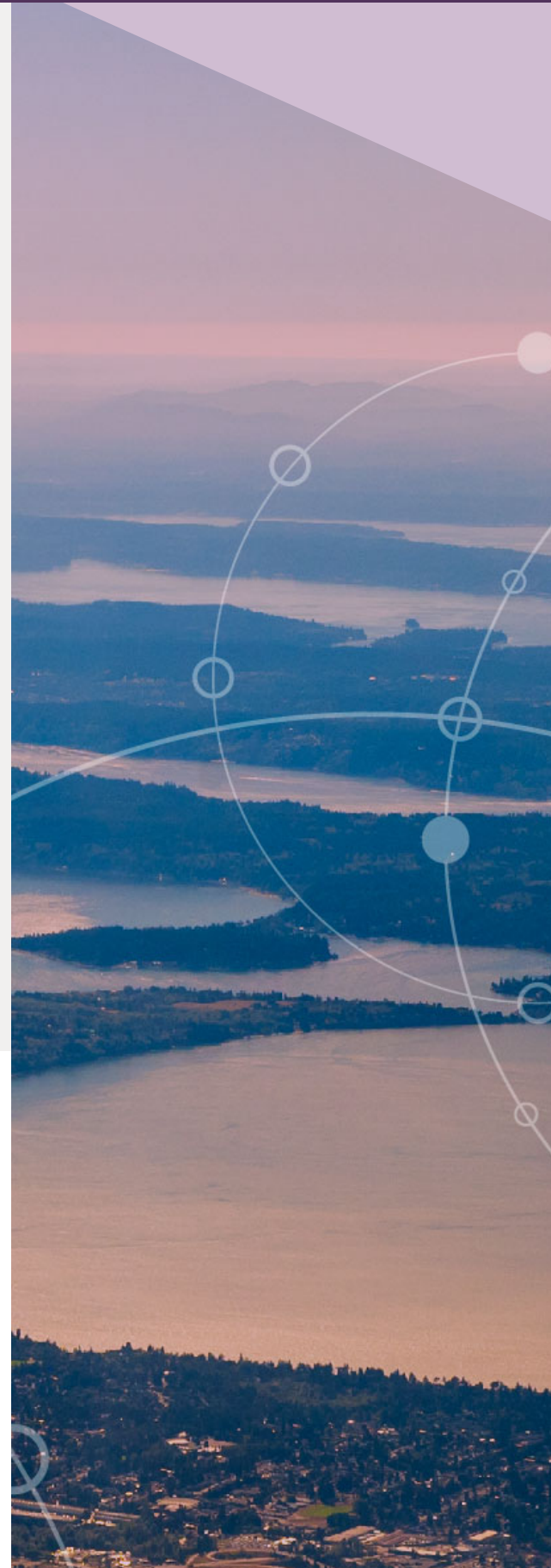
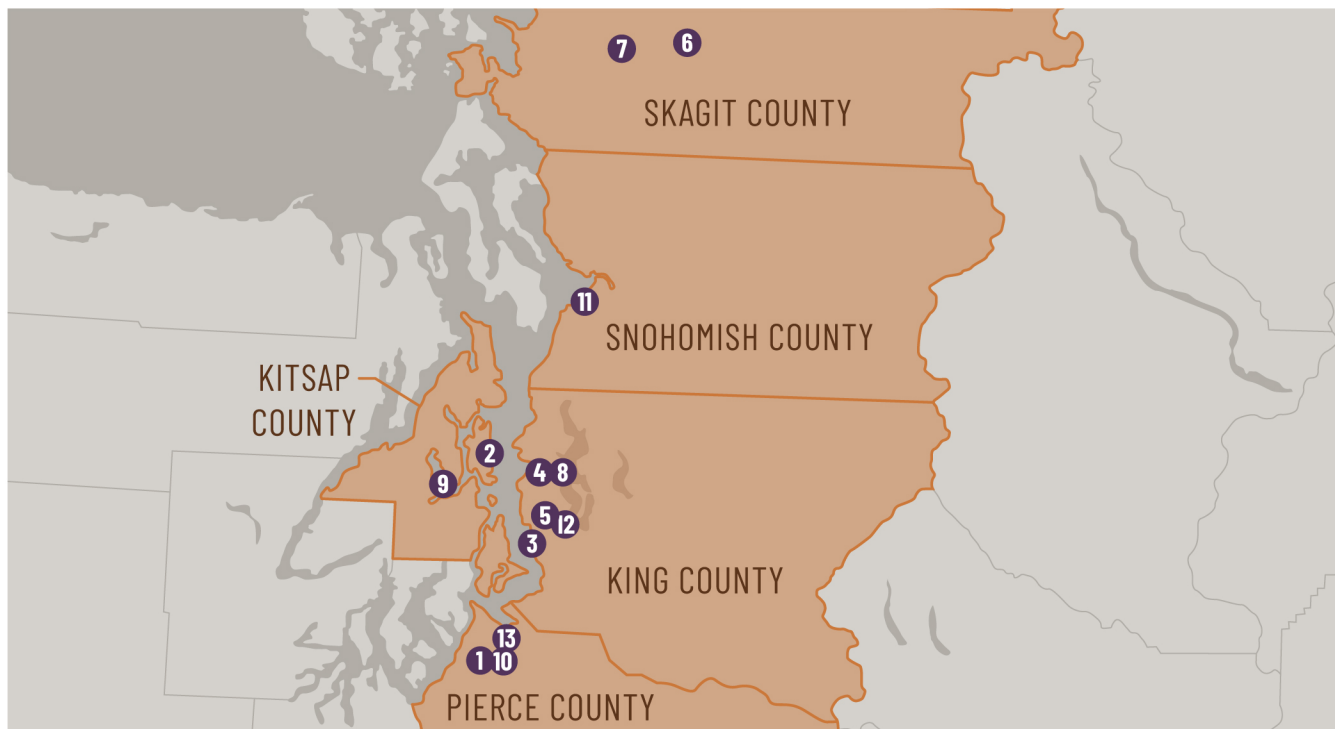


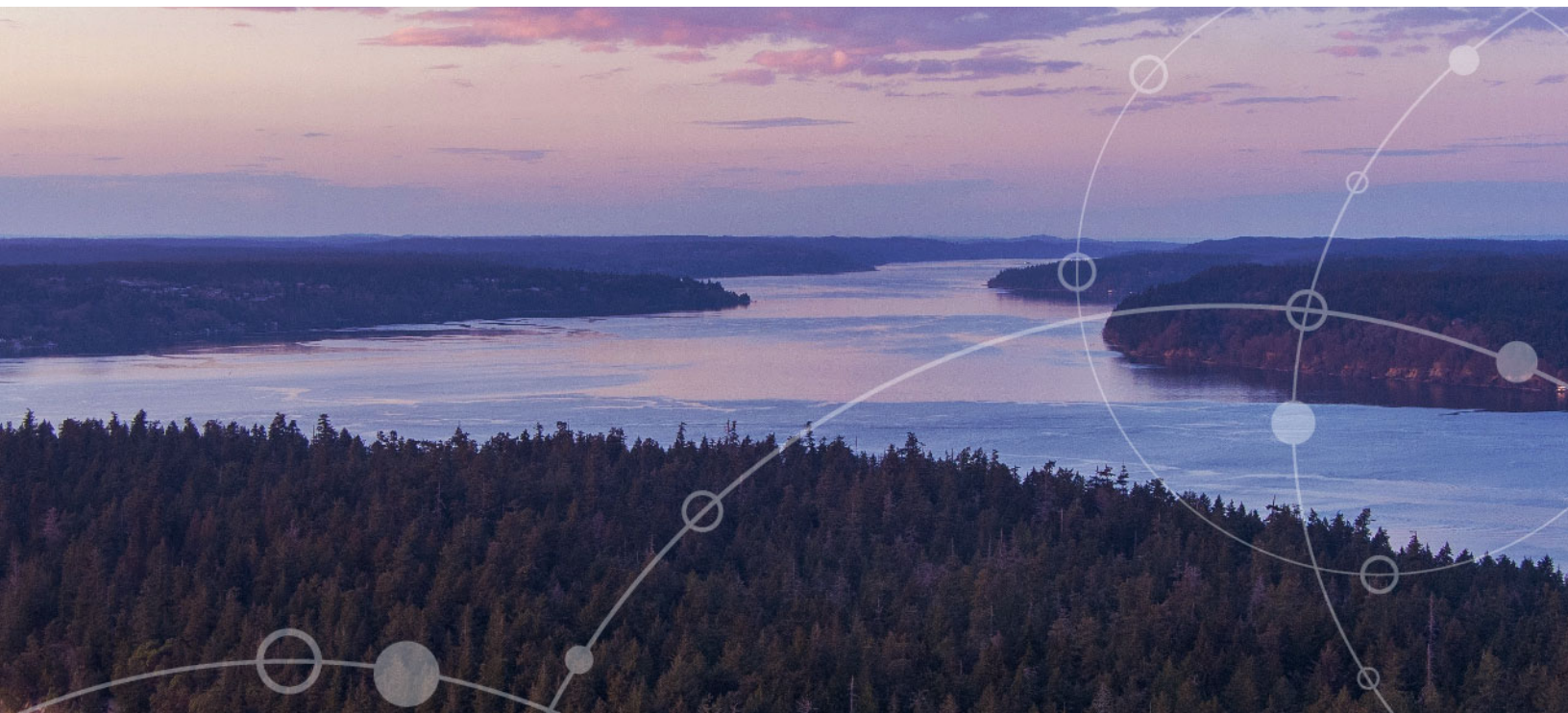
Figure 3. Map of Community Partners



Map Number.	Community Partner Overview
1	<b>350 Tacoma:</b> A grassroots climate justice organization that is building a diverse, collaborative movement to address climate change while advancing equity, public health, and economic justice.
2	<b>Alimentando al Pueblo &amp; Burien Collaborative:</b> An alliance of nonprofit organizations that work together to advance social justice and equity in Burien by amplifying collective community impact.
3	<b>Asia Pacific Cultural Center:</b> A Tacoma-based nonprofit that promotes cultural exchange, equity, and inclusion for Asian and Pacific Islander communities through programs, events, and services.
4	<b>Bainbridge Island Senior Community Center:</b> A community center that partners with the City of Bainbridge and empowers seniors to live healthy and independent lives by offering programs that support physical, mental, and social well-being.
5	<b>Byrd Barr Place:</b> A Seattle Central District-based organization that provides essential safety-net services such as food, housing support, and financial tools while also advocating for systemic change to advance equity and opportunity for Seattle communities.
6	<b>Duwamish Valley Sustainability Association:</b> A South Seattle, South Park Neighborhood-based organization that empowers residents – especially youth – to address environmental, social, and economic justice issues through education, community leadership, and projects aligned with global and sustainability goals.
7	<b>East Skagit Disaster Response and Recovery:</b> A 501c3 all-volunteer run nonprofit with emphasis on public safety that serves as an asset for existing county resources.
8	<b>Forterra:</b> A statewide conservation organization that protects land for people and nature while partnering with communities to support recovery, resilience, and sustainable development.

Map Number.	Community Partner Overview
9	<b>It Takes a Village:</b> A South Seattle-based nonprofit founded to support individuals and families experiencing hardship by providing direct assistance and resources rooted in compassion and lived experience.
10	<b>Kitsap County Emergency Management:</b> Kitsap County Emergency Management coordinates disaster preparedness, response, and recovery efforts, engaging volunteers and partners to help the county respond effectively to emergencies. While the Emergency Management Department serves the whole county, this project focused on Bremerton.
11	<b>Minority Hemp Builders Association<sup>2</sup>:</b> Kitsap County-based Minority Hemp Builders Association supports community resilience through technical assistance, training, and education for building with industrial hemp materials.
12	<b>Native Daily Network:</b> Pierce County-based Native Daily Network builds Indigenous power through advocacy, education, storytelling, and community engagement, centering Indigenous voices to protect sovereignty and drive meaningful social change.
13	<b>Refugee and Immigrant Services Northwest:</b> A refugee-led organization that supports immigrants and refugees through culturally and linguistically appropriate services that promote self-sufficiency and community integration.
14	<b>yəhaw̓ Indigenous Creatives Collective:</b> Salish Sea Community-focused yəhaw̓ Indigenous Creatives Collective supports Indigenous artists by reconnecting with land and creating equitable, well-paid creative opportunities that center women, Two Spirit, and youth artists.

<sup>2</sup> Minority Hemp Builders was one of 14 Community Partners selected for the mini grant, however they were unable to complete the scope of work due to unforeseen circumstances and implementation challenges, resulting in the termination of the mini grant contract.







## PUGET SOUND RESILIENCE HUBS | 2022-2026 PROJECT TIMELINE

2022	2023			
<p><b>June</b> Awarded RCPGP Grant</p> <p><b>September</b> ★Project begins</p>	<p><b>Q1</b> Outreach to regional partners and community at-large</p>	<p><b>Q2</b> The City forms Resilience Hubs Interdepartmental team Consultant RFP released</p>	<p><b>Q3</b> RFP closes; panel reviews submissions <b>Consultant team</b> selected and onboarded</p>	<p><b>Q4</b> <b>UW intern</b> begins <b>Project Framework</b> Developed <i>Gap analysis</i></p>
2024				
<p><b>Q1</b> <b>Outreach</b> to regional and CBO partners for mini- grant opportunity <b>The City</b> chairs 2024 Regional Catastrophic Planning Team <b>The City of Tacoma</b> joins project</p>	<p><b>Q2</b> <b>Project joins</b> Public Health Seattle King County Equity Response Team <b>UW Center</b> for Disaster Resilient Communities Panelist <b>Toolkits</b> and factsheets created and translated into 24 languages</p>	<p><b>Q3</b> ★<b>Dashboard</b> launched <b>Pierce County</b> Safety Summit Speaker <b>Outreach</b> for mini-grant opportunity; rating panel created ★<b>Mini-grant</b> recipients awarded (see <i>Figure 3</i>)</p>	<p><b>Q4</b> <b>Oregon American</b> Planning Association panelist <b>The City of Tacoma</b> Resilience Hubs RFP Listening Session <b>The cities</b> of Seattle and Tacoma execute Interlocal Agreement</p>	
<i>Gap analysis</i>				
<i>Dashboard Development</i>				
2025				2026
<p><b>Q1</b> <b>Regional</b> and national speaking engagements and relationship building (see left) <b>Interview</b> for Catastrophic Earthquakes and Community Survival documentary ★<b>First</b> Puget Sound Resilience Hub Network Quarterly Meeting with all Community Partners</p>	<p><b>Q2</b> <b>Timeline extension</b> submitted <b>South Park</b> Hazard Identification Community Neighborhood Walk <b>Survey</b> to community partners to inform training topics and needs <b>Trainings</b> planning and coordination</p>	<p><b>Q3</b> <b>Training</b> session 1 <b>Distributed 400</b> pre-packed emergency backpacks to CBOs <b>Podcast</b> with Duwamish Valley Sustainability Association Podcast with Bainbridge Island Senior and Community Center <b>Washington</b> American Planning Association Panelist <b>Training</b> session 2</p>	<p><b>Q4</b> <b>Training</b> session 3 <b>Project closeout</b> meeting with network <b>Community</b> partner final reports and contract end <b>Presentation</b> to Universidad de Chile - Santiago, Chile <b>Project closeout</b> and data collection</p>	<p><b>Q1</b> <b>Qualitative and quantitative</b> data analysis <b>Draft</b> final report <b>Community</b> partner review of final report</p>
<i>Quarterly network meetings</i>				
<i>Partner support through technical assistance and regular check-ins</i>				
<i>Partner-led community engagement on resilience hubs</i>				

# PILOT PROJECT FINDINGS

Community Partners' experiences and findings varied based on location, community needs, and local relationships to resilience. Engagement revealed widespread concern about disaster risks, significant gaps in preparedness, and clear evidence that barriers to preparedness are largely systemic rather than motivational. Common barriers included limited time, cost of supplies, accessibility needs, transportation challenges, resource disparities between renters and homeowners, and geographic location that would lead to isolation in an earthquake. Across communities, there was a strong interest in practical, neighborhood-scale solutions and broad consensus that resilience hubs should function as year-round community spaces, not just emergency infrastructure. For detailed findings from each Community Partner, see [Community Partner Engagement: What We Heard](#).



## Trusted Spaces and People

**Across all Community Partner projects, trust emerged as the foundation of effective resilience planning.** Participants consistently named churches, schools, and community centers as places they already trust and would rely on during an emergency. Access to information and services in native languages, along with visible leadership from trusted community members, was viewed as necessary for any successful resilience hub model. The engagement process underscored that meeting basic needs—clean water, food storage, shelter, backup power, first aid, and social supports such as child and elder care—should be the critical first step in building and sustaining that trust, in both every day and emergency contexts.

Community Partners also expressed a strong preference for decentralized, neighborhood-scale communication over government-led outreach, which many found inaccessible or ineffective. Feedback consistently reinforced that the most effective path to achieve this desired communication style is strengthening and scaling existing grassroots mutual aid networks or networks that residents already trust and depend on for everyday survival.

The project provided a snapshot into the concerns, constraints, and priorities among some of the communities who live in the Puget Sound, further highlighting why localized resiliency planning is essential to protecting lives and meeting everyday needs.



## Challenges and Feasibility Considerations

While community feedback indicated that there is strong interest in community resilience and emergency preparedness, resilience hub implementation still comes with significant challenges. The feasibility of establishing resilience hubs is limited by availability of suitable buildings and spaces, staffing for ongoing operations, and ongoing, reliable financial support.

A key challenge is **limited coordination** between community organizations and emergency management systems. This project found that many Community Partners lacked access to hazard-related data, training, and technical assistance. Risk data and planning tools are not consistently available across the Puget Sound region, which complicated site selection and community-specific planning, particularly where space ownership is unclear or a potential site is in a hazard risk area.

**Physical building and space limitations** also present a significant barrier. Many trusted gathering spaces were not designed for long-term emergency operations. Improvements such as backup power, water storage, communications systems, and accessibility are needed to ensure operational continuity during an emergency event. Most Community Partners shared that funding is already strained and doubted that the jurisdictional and community funding landscape would allow for expensive, ongoing investment towards these types of retrofits and new infrastructure.

**Staffing** is another constraint. Resilience hubs should function as emergency assets and year-round community resources, which requires dedicated staff, training, supplies, and ongoing coordination. These functions extend beyond many community organizations' core missions and capacities. Programming should be customized to the community served by the hub and in-language, which also requires staff capacity to implement and maintain.

**Sustained financial support** is needed. Many sites require significant upfront capital investment, as well as ongoing operational funding. This is particularly challenging in under-resourced frontline communities. In many cases, the financial viability of a resilience hub, or any resilience programming and resource support, is dependent on finding multiple opportunities to integrate resilience functions into capital projects or programs.

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EFFECTIVE RESILIENCE PLANNING



## 1. Start with Emergency Preparedness

Before launching resilience hub planning, communities need a foundational understanding of what to do during an emergency, how to navigate evacuation levels and routes, how to assemble an emergency kit, and the specific hazards in their area. Establishing this baseline creates a shared framework for more meaningful planning conversations.

In practice, building culturally informed emergency kits during engagement activities proved to be an effective and widely accessible entry point into both preparedness and longer-term resilience discussions. Asking communities what they want or need in a resilience hub without first grounding them in emergency preparedness can limit the effectiveness of the planning process and fall short of intended outcomes.

## 2. Frame Resilience Hubs as Achievable

Resilience hubs are most sustainable when they build on existing community infrastructure rather than starting from scratch. Many Community Partners were already serving as informal gathering spaces, resource connectors, and trusted messengers within their communities. Building on those existing relationships and capacities strengthens inclusivity and resilience without duplicating efforts or creating parallel systems.

Using familiar spaces, culturally grounded leadership, and established service networks, resilience investments can amplify what communities already do well. This approach reduces barriers to participation, aligns with community priorities, and increases the likelihood that resilience activities will continue beyond initial grant funding.

### 3. Expand and Clarify the Definition of Resilience Hubs

Resilience hubs should be defined broadly to reflect the diverse ways communities build and sustain resilience. The predominant framework—advanced by the Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN)—emphasizes high-performing, hardened facilities with standalone operational capabilities. While this model represents a strong vision, it is financially out of reach for many community-led efforts and requires substantial planning, technical expertise, and upfront capital investment.

Additional constraints include whether an organization owns or leases its space, the availability of ongoing funding for programming and maintenance, and overall organizational capacity. For example, the FH Fauntleroy Community Enrichment Center in Washington, D.C., demonstrates that the USDN framework can be successful. However, bringing this vision to life required more than \$1 million in combined local and federal funding, which is a scale that is not realistic for many communities given current budget constraints. Smaller organizations may also face barriers related to grant-writing capacity, compliance requirements, and the administrative burden of managing large government awards.



### 4. Center Equity, Language Access, and Cultural Relevance

Language access and cultural relevance are foundational to meaningful engagement. Communities showed higher participation and stronger knowledge retention when hazard education and preparedness guidance were delivered in their languages and aligned with cultural norms and values. Community Partners expanded multilingual resources, developed real-time alert systems, and implemented culturally grounded education strategies to ensure information was both accessible and trusted.

Effective resilience planning also centered lived realities, such as the needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people without personal transportation. Successful strategies incorporated evacuation planning, accessibility, and coordination around basic needs: food, medical supplies, and safe shelter. Low-tech communication systems were prioritized to ensure connectivity during power or cellular outages, reflecting community-identified priorities and experiential knowledge.

## 5. Ensure Consistent and Sustainable Funding

Consistent funding is essential to move resilience efforts from short-term pilot projects to sustained community infrastructure. One-time grants may support planning, outreach, or initial capital improvements, but resilience requires ongoing investment in staffing, programming, facility maintenance, training, and relationship-building. Without stable funding streams, community partners are forced into cyclical grant-seeking that pulls capacity away from implementation.

Sustainable funding models should include multi-year commitments, flexible structures, and support for both operational and capital needs. Operational funding, which is often the hardest to secure, is particularly critical, since trusted staff and culturally competent facilitators are the backbone of resilience work. Investments should also account for administrative capacity, grant management, reporting requirements, and compliance costs, especially for smaller community organizations.

Diversified funding strategies can increase stability. This may include braided funding from local, state, and federal sources; philanthropic partnerships; private-sector engagement; and integration of resilience investments into broader capital improvement or public health budgets.



# REFLECTIONS AND NEXT STEPS

## Reflections on Outcomes

The RCPG pilot project navigated multiple challenges: funding uncertainty during a federal government shutdown, varied levels of community preparedness, and differing capacities among Community Partners. The project team addressed these challenges by adapting program design, offering flexible funding, and expanding technical assistance—prioritizing education and programmatic resilience over establishment of new physical facilities.

Key adaptations included:

- + **Expanded resilience hub models:** The project evolved from a single, facility-centered resilience hub model to four distinct resilience models, reflecting the diversity of communities, organizational capacities, and geographic contexts across the Puget Sound region.
- + **Flexible funding awards:** Funding structures were adjusted to account for differences in Community Partner size, staffing capacity, and community reach. This flexibility reduced administrative burden on smaller organizations while allowing larger organizations to pursue more complex activities.
- + **Shift toward local jurisdiction partnerships:** In response to federal funding reductions, the project deepened engagement with local jurisdictions to identify funding opportunities and strengthened relationships that could sustain resilience work beyond the grant period.
- + **Development of a public-facing toolkit:** This project created a template-based, public-facing toolkit to minimize planning workload on Community Partners and support consistency across communities.
- + **Community self-definition:** Terminology shifted from “neighborhoods” to “communities,” allowing Community Partners to define the populations they serve in ways that respect cultural, social, and relational boundaries.
- + **Establishment of an ongoing regional network:** Instead of a single post-workshop seminar, the project created the Puget Sound Resilience Hub Network as an ongoing regional cohort for peer learning and sustained collaboration.

## Community Partner Recommendations

Based on the RCPG Project Team’s closeout meeting with the Community Partners, the following themes emerged as top recommendations for advancing resilience hub planning.

### Advancing resilience hub planning efforts:

- + Continue culturally rooted, event-based outreach that engages families in approachable ways—such as community celebrations that also share preparedness knowledge and supplies.
- + Partner with trusted leaders and organizations to reach residents effectively.
- + Apply trauma-informed approaches, as personal experience and cultural history shape how communities perceive and respond to disaster preparedness.
- + Make technical information accessible through hazard-specific emergency kits, clear evacuation maps, and concise guidance rather than lengthy plans.
- + Prioritize in-person engagement through go-kit building and distribution at community events and resource fairs.

### Feedback on pilot project design and implementation:

- + Simplify reporting requirements to reduce administrative burden and allow partners to focus on engagement and on-the-ground response.
- + Invest more time and resources in train-the-trainer programs so community leaders can sustain and expand preparedness education.
- + Clarify the purpose of the trainings and quarterly Network meetings earlier in the project.
- + Offer trainings earlier, during active community engagement phases.
- + Build stronger relationships and more consistent communication—in-person and virtual—between the project team and Community Partners from the start.
- + Develop smaller, region-specific networks to improve coordination for partners outside Seattle.
- + Strengthen connections with regional, county, and local emergency management departments.

## Next Steps & Continued Capacity Building for Resilience Hubs

To sustain and build upon the capabilities developed through the RCPG project, Seattle OEM will focus on maintaining and updating the project dashboard to track implementation progress and support future planning and decision-making. OEM will also support replication of the project framework across jurisdictions by sharing key deliverables, tools, templates, and lessons learned with interested partners. Within Seattle, OEM will expand participation through additional training and information-sharing opportunities for Community Partners, while continuing to convene and grow the Puget Sound Resilience Hub Network to strengthen regional coordination and cross-jurisdictional collaboration.

# COMMUNITY PARTNER ENGAGEMENT: WHAT WE HEARD

Each community is distinct in its culture, context, and lived experience and therefore faces unique concerns and priorities. Community Partner-led engagement identified these diverse perspectives, concerns, constraints, resource needs, and service priorities to directly inform and shape individualized and community-specific resilience planning needs.

Each of the 14 Community Partners completed their own workplans, engagement activities, staff capacity building, and final reports documenting their learnings. Summarized below are 2-page summaries for each of our Community Partners that provide organizational and community context, engagement activities completed, and key next steps for continuing resilience hub work.

**Each Community Partner summary is alphabetized in the following order:**

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# 350 TACOMA AND NATIVE DAILY NETWORK

The goal of 350 Tacoma and Native Daily Network's (NDN) joint project was to strengthen community resilience by increasing preparedness knowledge, amplifying grassroots mutual aid capacity, and identifying community-informed priorities for resilience hubs in Tacoma. 350 Tacoma and NDN are both grassroots nonprofit organizations located in Tacoma, WA. In an effort to streamline resilience hub engagement activities, 350 Tacoma and NDN collaborated to co-author a workplan, host engagement activities, build staff capacity, and develop final reports documenting their learnings.

Their project emphasized inclusive, grassroots-led outreach centered on populations most likely to experience disproportionate impacts during emergencies, including low-income households, Indigenous communities, unhoused individuals, elders, youth, LGBTQIA+ residents, immigrants, and people living with disabilities in Tacoma.

Through an assortment of presentations, surveys, skills trainings, event tabling, mutual aid engagement, and a community resource fair, the project gathered extensive qualitative and quantitative data on community preparedness, perceived risks, barriers to resilience, and priorities for resilience hub development. The work intentionally centered lived experience and community trust, particularly among groups historically underserved by traditional emergency planning processes.



## Activities Conducted

The project included 7 primary engagement activities, supported by logistics, planning, and reporting efforts:

- + Community Presentations and Discussions
- + Creative Community Engagement
- + Disaster Preparedness and Skills Trainings
- + Service Provider Engagement
- + Event Tabling and Outreach
- + Community Resource Fair
- + Data Collection and Reporting

## HOW 350 TACOMA & NDN DEFINE RESILIENCE

Not only the ability to withstand and recover from disasters (“gray-sky days”), but it is also the capacity to meet daily needs, build social cohesion, and support vulnerable populations during non-emergency conditions (“blue-sky days”). This definition emphasizes equity, accessibility, mutual aid, and community self-determination as foundational elements of effective resilience.

## ★ Key Feedback

Community members reported significant barriers in emergency preparedness and consistently expressed a strong desire to be more equipped during a disaster or emergency. Many participants lacked knowledge of evacuation routes, emergency plans, or where to seek help during disasters. Surveys and discussions revealed that low-income residents, renters, unhoused individuals, and people with disabilities face compounded challenges that make standard preparedness guidance unrealistic.

There was widespread concern that the burden of preparedness is placed too heavily on individuals, while city and county systems are already at capacity during normal conditions. Participants highlighted the critical role of grassroots mutual aid organizations, noting that these groups are often first responders during extreme weather and crises, yet they remain underfunded and understaffed.

Feedback also revealed deep skepticism about equitable funding for resilience infrastructure in Tacoma, particularly in the South End of Pierce County and South Tacoma neighborhoods. Community members emphasized that resilience hubs should prioritize essential services, such as food access, showers, medical support, information sharing, and safe gathering spaces, rather than amenities favored in more affluent and well-resourced areas. Service providers reported severe burnout, limited staffing, and reliance on volunteers with minimal training. Many stressed the need for better coordination, funding, and formal partnerships with local governments to sustain services during both emergencies and everyday conditions.



## ➔ Continued Planned Work

This project demonstrated that community resilience is already being built daily through mutual aid, trust, and care. Sustained investment, equitable planning, and formal recognition of grassroots leadership are essential to scale these efforts and ensure Tacoma is prepared for future emergencies. Next steps to moving this work forward include expanding public education, supporting mutual aid organizations, improving access to information, and advancing resource mapping.



# ALIMENTANDO AL PUEBLO AND BURIEN COLLABORATIVE

This report summarizes findings from a collaboration between two aligned organizations, Alimentando Al Pueblo and Burien Collaborative’s mini-grant for work conducted between April 2025 and September 2025. Through a series of workshops, resource-sharing events, and targeted engagement activities, Alimentando al Pueblo and Burien Collaborative engaged housed and unhoused residents of Burien, Washington, as well as local service providers. The project focused on understanding community needs related to climate impacts, emergency preparedness, and access to resilience resources, particularly for Latine and unhoused populations who are disproportionately affected by disasters and extreme weather. Engagement activities were designed to share accessible preparedness information, gather community feedback, and elevate community voices to inform future resilience planning efforts.

The primary purpose of the project was to center the voices of Burien’s most vulnerable communities in local resilience planning and to document their needs, priorities, and lived experiences related to climate change and disasters. Alimentando Al Pueblo and Burien Collaborative participated despite the project being outside its traditional scope because of growing concern about climate impacts, gaps in local emergency planning, and the disproportionate burden disasters place on low-income, renter, immigrant, and unhoused communities.



## Activities Conducted

Alimentando al Pueblo and Burien Collaborative conducted 5 primary engagement activities. These included resource and information sharing with mental health providers and service organizations, bilingual outreach at community workshops, and Spanish-language resilience workshops with Latine residents of Burien. Two workshops focused on understanding preparedness levels, communication preferences, and barriers faced by housed Latine renters. A fifth engagement specifically centered on the experiences of unhoused residents in Burien regarding extreme weather exposure, access to services, and safety challenges.

Across these engagements, over 200 participants were reached. Activities included the distribution of emergency preparedness materials, surveys, facilitated discussions, and relationship-building with trusted community groups. All engagement emphasized accessibility, cultural relevance, and trust-building.

## HOW ALIMENTANDO AL PUEBLO & BURIEN COLLABORATIVE DEFINE RESILIENCE

Not only the ability to survive disasters, but access to information, basic needs, social connection, dignity, and trust before, during, and after emergencies. For many participants, resilience means having clear, accessible communication, knowing where to go for help, being able to protect family and neighbors, and having inclusive systems that do not exclude people because of language, housing status, disability, pets, or medical needs.



## ★ Key Feedback

Housed Latine residents shared high levels of concern about earthquakes, fires, and extreme heat, but low levels of preparedness. Many participants lacked emergency kits, family emergency plans, and insurance coverage, largely due to information gaps, financial barriers, and uncertainty about where to begin. As long-term renters in apartments and multi-generational households, participants expressed limited ability to make physical improvements to their homes and a heightened risk of displacement following disasters. There was strong interest in hands-on workshops, low-cost preparedness strategies, and clear, bilingual information delivered through trusted channels such as WhatsApp, group text messages, and community meetings.

Unhoused participants shared urgent concerns related to survival during extreme weather. Many reported communication gaps and limited or inconsistent access to warming and cooling centers, clean water, protective equipment, transportation, and medical accommodations. Exclusionary shelter policies related to pets, partners, and personal belongings, including medical equipment, were identified as major barriers. Social isolation and chronic health conditions compounded vulnerability, with many participants reporting long-term homelessness and repeated exposure to extreme heat, cold, and wildfire smoke.

## Continued Planned Work

Overall, the project demonstrated strong community engagement potential and highlighted the need for sustained investment in education, communication, and inclusive preparedness strategies. Participants across activities emphasized the importance of trust, dignity, and human connection in resilience planning. Alimentando al Pueblo and Burien Collaborative will continue leveraging trusted relationships, partnerships, and lessons learned from this project to advance equitable resilience planning in Burien.

Building on project findings, Alimentando al Pueblo and Burien Collaborative plans to continue resilience efforts through deeper coordination with the City of Burien’s Emergency Management Office. Next steps for the housed Latine community include hosting hands-on preparedness workshops focused on local hazards, building low-cost emergency kits, and creating simple family emergency plans. Efforts will also focus on fostering neighborhood-level connections, identifying community “captains,” and supporting hyper-local mutual aid networks. For the unhoused community, the next steps include convening a forum with individuals experiencing homelessness, service providers, and community leaders to review findings and co-design solutions. Planned actions include developing a durable, easy-to-read resource guide for warming and cooling centers, launching proactive outreach during extreme weather events, distributing survival supplies, and exploring transportation partnerships to improve access to services.





# ASIA PACIFIC CULTURAL CENTER

Through RCPG's Resilience Hubs mini-grant, the Asia Pacific Cultural Center (APCC) was selected to carry out community-informed resilience work between January 2, 2025, and September 25, 2025. Grounded in decades of trust and service, APCC's Community Environmental Justice (CEJ) Program engaged communities not just as subjective participants but as subject matter experts of their own lived experiences.

Across Tacoma and Pierce County, APCC created spaces for authentic dialogue through culturally responsive workshops, listening sessions, and surveys by meeting people where they already gather, worship, learn, and care for one another. The project intentionally centered Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) communities along with elders, faith leaders, and youth, focusing on groups that are often on the frontlines of environmental harm yet remain underrepresented in emergency planning due to language, cultural, and access barriers. This work elevated voices that are too often unheard and affirmed that resilience begins with trust, dignity, and belonging.

The goal of this project was to understand how communities define resilience and what would be needed for resilience hubs to feel safe, trusted, and truly usable. Through shared stories and collective reflection, resilience emerged as more than disaster readiness alone.



## Activities Conducted

Between July and September 2025, APCC's CEJ Program staff facilitated 6 workshop-style listening sessions with 6 faith-based community groups in Tacoma. Each workshop included an introduction to the concept of resilience hubs, guided scenario-based discussions rooted in real-life emergencies, and survey dissemination and collection. More than 145 community members participated, ranging from ages 14 to 92 and speaking English, Samoan, Chinese, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. The sessions created space for participants to reflect on past disasters, current fears, and future hopes. Conversations focused on emergency preparedness, trusted gathering places, everyday needs, and the training and resources essential to surviving and healing together.

## HOW APCC DEFINES RESILIENCE

The strength of relationships, the comfort of familiar spaces, and the ability to care for one another physically, emotionally, culturally, and spiritually before, during, and after emergencies. It means knowing where to go, who to trust, and how to communicate in moments of uncertainty. It means having resources in languages people know and services that honor culture, faith, and intergenerational care.



## Key Feedback

Across all engagements, consistent themes emerged.

- + **Trusted Spaces:** Churches, community centers, and schools were repeatedly named as places of safety. Participants emphasized that trust is built through familiarity and long-standing relationships and not signage or designation alone.
- + **Preparedness Gaps:** Many community members shared uncertainty about evacuation plans or where to go if their homes were unsafe. Youth participants especially noted that preparedness is rarely discussed at school and at home.
- + **Training Needs:** There was strong interest in hands-on, practical training like CPR, first aid, search and rescue, survival skills, water purification, food preservation, and managing chronic health conditions during emergencies in local and accessible neighborhoods.
- + **Resources:** Communities identified urgent needs for food, clean water, clothing, radios, flashlights, generators, hygiene supplies, and preparedness kits. Cost was a significant barrier, especially for multigenerational and shared households.
- + **Communication Barriers:** Power outages, limited access to technology, unfamiliar emergency terminology, and lack of multilingual materials made it difficult for many participants to receive timely and accurate information.
- + **Cultural & Emotional Support:** Participants emphasized that resilience is inseparable from social connection, cultural identity, and spiritual care, particularly for elders, immigrants, and those far from extended family.



## Continued Planned Work

APCC's CEJ Program will continue advancing resilience planning through collaboration with the Tacoma Office of Emergency Management and local partners. APCC will co-create culturally tailored trainings for emergency preparedness, while supporting other CBO's and faith institutions in developing emergency action plans, evacuation routes, and preparedness activities. APCC will also continue to explore trusted community spaces as potential resilience hubs and expand access to preparedness resources like multilingual materials and low-tech communication tools that function during power outages. Through continued partnership and investment, APCC is committed to ensuring that resilience hubs are community-led, culturally rooted, and reflective of the real experiences, strengths, and knowledge of Tacoma's diverse communities.



Bainbridge Island  
Senior & Community Center

# BAINBRIDGE ISLAND SENIOR AND COMMUNITY CENTER

The Bainbridge Island Senior & Community Center (BISCC) participated in the RCPG Resilience Hubs project as part of its ongoing effort to design and develop a new, expanded Senior & Community Center. BISCC wanted to ensure that resilience was intentionally embedded into both the physical design and programming of the new Center that will continue serving as a critical emergency hub and long-term resilience asset for Bainbridge Island. During the grant period, BISCC engaged senior residents, partner organizations, and local government to assess how the Center can best support community needs during emergencies while also strengthening social connection, accessibility, and preparedness during non-emergency (“blue-sky”) conditions. Through meetings, focus groups, community events, podcasts, and real-world emergency activation, BISCC advanced a shared vision of resilience grounded in inclusivity, adaptability, and strong local partnerships. Through collective reflection, resilience emerged as more than disaster readiness alone.



## Activities Conducted

BISCC conducted a wide range of engagement and planning activities during the grant period, including:

- + **A large annual membership meeting** which engaged community members in discussions on resilience hub functions, emergency preparedness, accessibility, volunteer mobilization, and intergenerational connection.
- + **Activation of BISCC as an overnight cold-weather warming shelter** in partnership with Bainbridge Prepares and the City of Bainbridge Island, providing real-time insights into operational and facility needs.
- + **Focus groups** with individuals who are visually impaired and those with access and functional needs to inform universal design features for the new building.
- + **Ongoing collaboration** with Bainbridge Prepares through meetings, podcasts, and technical consultations focused on emergency response, food resilience, accessibility, communications, and volunteer coordination.
- + **Community education** through podcasts addressing resilience topics such as emergency preparedness, fire safety, behavioral health response, sea level rise, cybersecurity, and fraud prevention.
- + **A Community Resource Fair** connected residents with nearly 40 service providers to strengthen awareness of local resources and build social cohesion.
- + **Engagement with the City of Bainbridge Island’s Race Equity Advisory Committee and the Suquamish Tribe** to incorporate equity, cultural inclusion, and early collaboration into planning efforts.
- + **Regular meetings of the Building Project Task Force** and consultations with sustainability, accessibility, and American Disabilities Act experts to integrate resilience, energy efficiency, and universal design into the facility’s development.

## HOW BISCC DEFINES RESILIENCE

The ability of a community to remain connected, supported, and functional during everyday life, emergencies, and long-term environmental or social disruptions. This includes having trusted spaces that are accessible to all, systems that can operate during outages or disasters, and strong relationships that enable coordinated response and mutual aid. Resilience should be consistently framed as both infrastructure readiness and social cohesion.



### Key Feedback

Community feedback consistently emphasized the importance of BISCC serving as a safe, welcoming, and accessible hub during emergencies and everyday life. Participants highlighted the need for emergency supplies on-site, clear signage identifying the Center as a safe space, and improved accessibility features such as ramps, handrails, wider hallways, and sensory-friendly design. There was strong support for intergenerational programming, volunteer mobilization plans, and collaboration with local organizations to strengthen coordinated response efforts.

Feedback from emergency shelter activation and focus groups identified specific facility needs, including access to showers and laundry, increased electrical capacity for device charging, backup power systems, improved wayfinding, and inclusive communication tools. Across all engagements, residents reinforced that resilience depends on physical readiness and strong relationships built through ongoing engagement and trust.



### Continued Planned Work

Building on the outcomes of this project, BISCC will continue advancing the design and capital planning of the new Senior & Community Center with resilience as a core function. Next steps include integrating community and partner feedback into architectural plans, advancing sustainability goals such as LEED Silver certification, and further developing emergency power, communications, and accessibility systems. BISCC will maintain close collaboration with Bainbridge Prepares, the City of Bainbridge Island, and other partners to align emergency response planning, volunteer coordination, and preparedness education. The organization will continue hosting public education events and podcasts, strengthening intergenerational and culturally inclusive programming for the Center to serve as both a primary emergency hub and a year-round resilience hub that supports the long-term well-being of the Bainbridge Island community.



# BYRD BARR PLACE

Byrd Barr Place conducted a focused, community-driven preparedness assessment to inform the development of a neighborhood-anchored resilience hub model that supports community members during both everyday “blue-sky” conditions and emergency “gray-sky” events. The purpose was to design a resilience hub model that reflects the realities of the communities that Byrd Barr Place serves and center equity, dignity, and accessibility. Due to funding and capacity challenges, Byrd Barr Place adapted its approach to ensure the assessment remained timely, equitable, and grounded in lived experience.

Originally envisioned as a partner-led effort, the project shifted to direct engagement led by Byrd Barr Place when partner participation became limited. To maintain momentum and ensure community voices continued to shape the resilience hub design, Byrd Barr Place pivoted to direct, in-language engagement within its own service footprint, particularly through its high-volume food bank. This approach allowed Byrd Barr Place to reach clients where they already receive trusted services and to aggregate insights that would directly inform a practical and inclusive resilience strategy.



## Activities Conducted

Byrd Barr Place convened 3 listening sessions with clients at its food bank, which serves residents across more than 20 Greater Seattle area zip codes and welcomes individuals from across Washington State. To reduce barriers to participation, Byrd Barr Place conducted more than 200 interviews and surveys in 4 languages: English, Mandarin, Amharic, and Spanish. Surveys and discussions were intentionally simplified and administered in trusted settings to encourage participation from older adults, linguistically diverse communities, and individuals experiencing housing and food insecurity.

Engagement activities were paired with a mapping workplan that organized findings into 2 practical categories: Critical Infrastructure and Community Resources. This structure was designed to translate community input into actionable wayfinding, preparedness planning, and future resilience hub functions. Byrd Barr Place directly aggregated and analyzed the data to ensure insights could be applied quickly and equitably.

## HOW BYRD BARR PLACE DEFINES RESILIENCE

The ability of individuals and communities to maintain well-being, access resources, and support one another before, during, and after disruptions. Participants and staff emphasized that resilience must function in everyday conditions as well as during crises. This includes reliable access to food, language-accessible information, mobility supports, trusted relationships, and neighborhood-based systems of care. For Byrd Barr Place, resilience is an extension of daily service provision rooted in trust, cultural responsiveness, and meeting people where they are.



## Key Feedback

Findings revealed a significant preparedness gap among older adults, who made up a large share of respondents. Many reported limited emergency supplies, few contingency plans, and uncertainty about where to go or who to contact during emergencies. Language access emerged as a barrier within the engagement process itself, reinforcing that preparedness information is often not reaching communities in timely, intelligible ways. Participants emphasized the importance of in-language alerts, trainings, and printed materials available during non-emergency periods, not only during crises.

Mobility constraints were noted as a challenge, where participants described difficulty traveling to cooling centers, clean-air sites, food distribution points, and charging hubs, particularly when transportation systems are disrupted. This feedback underscored the need for neighborhood-based check-in systems, last-mile delivery strategies, and door-to-door information pathways as core resilience functions rather than optional supports.

The assessment also highlighted the realities faced by individuals living in tiny house communities, defined as Enhanced Emergency Shelters, or experiencing housing and food insecurity. Participants noted limited storage space, inconsistent access to power and refrigeration, and challenges securing personal belongings. These conditions require preparedness approaches that include compact kits, portable power options, community cache sites, and neighbor-to-neighbor support systems that work in constrained living environments.



## Continued Planned Work

Overall, the project produced actionable, community-informed findings and established a clear, equitable path forward for resilience hub implementation. Byrd Barr Place's next steps focus on translating insight into action. Planned efforts include simplifying and disseminating preparedness guidance in multiple languages through trusted messengers and familiar communication channels and prioritizing age- and mobility-aware supports.

Byrd Barr Place plans to tailor kits and messaging for individuals in tiny house communities and those experiencing housing or food insecurity. The organization will publish and maintain a print-ready, legend-clear map identifying Critical Infrastructure and Community Resources, supported by in-language digital versions and large-format posters placed in common areas. Additionally, Byrd Barr Place plans to host 2 disaster-skills training sessions. Leveraging its role as a long-standing, Black-led anchor institution in Seattle's Central District, Byrd Barr Place will continue convening public agencies, service providers, and community groups to braid together resources and sustain resilience as a part of everyday community well-being.



# DUWAMISH VALLEY SUSTAINABILITY ASSOCIATION

Duwamish Valley Sustainability Association (DVSA) is an organization that empowers residents, especially youth, to address environmental, social, and economic justice issues through education, community leadership, and projects aligned with global and sustainability goals. DVSA primarily serves residents in South Park, Georgetown, White Center, and Tukwila, with engagement efforts aimed at planning a resilience center designed to support approximately 500 people, or about 10% of the combined population of South Park and Georgetown. For this project, DVSA worked with stakeholders from Duwamish Valley community organizations of King County and focused their efforts on earthquake disaster preparedness and resilience.

Engagement was conducted in both English and Spanish with the goal of reaching the predominantly Spanish speaking community in the Duwamish Valley, and materials were also translated into Khmer (Cambodian). There is no precise data about proportions of language speakers in the Duwamish Valley, but roughly 65% of residents identify as non-white and over 30 languages are spoken in local schools.



## Activities Conducted

DVSA highlighted the lack of a Disaster Resilience Center within the Duwamish Valley and sought to identify community needs and requirements for implementing the center. The list was evaluated by stakeholders at community events. DVSA held their first community event for the project on March 25, 2025, with the main objective being to hear attendees' needs in a hypothetical earthquake scenario. The second community event was held on May 29, 2025, in partnership with the City of Seattle OEM, who presented on the impacts of a major earthquake in Seattle and projected impacts on the Duwamish Valley.

After 2 community events, DVSA created a guidance document outlining what the Duwamish Valley community needs to address to better prepare, respond, and recover in the event of an earthquake. This included developing a Disaster Risk Management Plan (DRMP), Evacuation Plan, and a Financial Risk Management Plan for Disasters for the Duwamish Valley. DVSA continued community education efforts through a public podcast, *Is South Park Prepared for a Major Earthquake?*, recorded on August 18, 2025, and shared broadly through DVSA and partner channels.

DVSA worked with the RCPG project team to assess potential gathering sites in South Park. Out of a list of 14 potential sites in the Duwamish Valley, the best locations for community gatherings in the event of a natural disaster were reunification areas at Concord International School and Marra Farm Park due to their location in an area of rocky, non-liquefied soil, making them safer for congregation and response activities. The Seattle OEM will coordinate follow-up efforts with City of Seattle Parks & Recreation Department and Seattle Public School District to ensure these two options are viable for the community.

## HOW DVSA DEFINES RESILIENCE

Capacity of a community to empower itself to address environmental problems through community leadership and collaboration. This includes having accessible and reliable spaces that can function during power outages or disasters, and strong relationships that enable a coordinated response and mutual support. Resilience has been systematically defined as the preparation of culturally appropriate infrastructure and social cohesion following a risk analysis, the development of an evacuation plan, and the creation of a financial plan, thereby preparing the community, especially the most vulnerable, in a resilient manner.



### Key Feedback

Community engagement throughout the project highlighted a strong need for clear, accessible, and locally relevant guidance for earthquake and flood preparedness in the Duwamish Valley. Participants consistently expressed uncertainty about what actions to take before, during, and after a major earthquake, citing the absence of neighborhood-specific evacuation plans, risk information, and recovery guidance.

Community members emphasized the importance of receiving preparedness information in multiple languages and through trusted, familiar channels. Feedback also underscored the value of in-person engagement and practical education that explains the real magnitude of earthquake risks in the Duwamish Valley. Participants noted barriers to effective emergency response, including limited access to reliable information, lack of designated and well-known community gathering sites, and insufficient coordination between government agencies and community groups. There was strong support for developing community-informed reference materials and ongoing education to build confidence, awareness, and readiness.



### Continued Planned Work

Building on community input and project findings, DVSA will continue collaborating with the City of Seattle and other stakeholders to strengthen earthquake preparedness in the Duwamish Valley. Planned next steps include advancing a community-based guidance document to inform future City emergency planning. DVSA will also support continued community education through multilingual outreach, including podcasts and other accessible communication tools, to expand awareness of earthquake risks and preparedness actions. Coordination with the Seattle OEM will continue to assess and advance viable community gathering locations, particularly Concord International School and Marra-Desimone Park, as potential disaster response and resilience hub sites. Lastly, DVSA will advocate for the integration of community disaster resilience centers into future South Park infrastructure planning to ensure long-term, equitable resilience.

# FORTERRA AND EAST SKAGIT DISASTER RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

Forterra is a statewide conservation organization that protects land for people and nature while partnering with communities to support recovery, resilience, and sustainable development. Forterra was already working in Hamilton, WA to support flood mitigation and relocation of critical assets located on the Skagit River. Through the RCPG project, Forterra began to include outreach and engagement on resilience hubs with their existing work. Forterra collaborated with East Skagit Disaster Response and Recovery (ESDRR), a 501c3 All-Volunteer Run nonprofit with emphasis on public safety and as an asset for existing county resources, to assess disaster risks and emergency preparedness gaps within East Skagit communities. Goals for this project were to elevate the voices of community members most impacted by disasters while assessing the practicality of resilience hubs as a locally appropriate strategy for emergency response and recovery, improving coordination among existing response networks, and strengthening emergency communications.



## Activities Conducted

DVSA highlighted the lack of a Disaster Resilience Engagement activities provided a guideline for resilience hub planning in a local context to build trust-based relationships with community members. These activities focused on East Skagit's isolated location and flood risk and included the following.

- + **Community Workshops:** This initial kickoff workshop introduced the resilience hub model and described the project's scope. An initial kickoff meeting allowed the beginning of trust-building with residents and agencies.
- + **Listening Sessions:** Listening sessions focused on the experiences of community members most impacted by disasters, particularly those with housing insecurity. This also included a session that engaged ESDRR to assess operational needs.
- + **Key Informant Interviews:** Interviews with local leaders, journalists, and emergency volunteers provided deeper insight into systemic challenges. Interviewees included Town of Concrete Treasurer, Concrete Herald Editor, Concrete Councilmember, and Skagit Community Emergency Response Team Lead.
- + **Public Survey:** The public survey was released to members in October 2024. The survey results identified key areas of concern including flooding, local dam failures, landslides, fire, wind, and power outages.

Key partners for engagement included community groups from food banks, community centers, local media, emergency response volunteers, and local government representatives. These organizations played a critical role in hosting engagement activities, reaching underrepresented community members, sharing local knowledge, and informing hub planning based around on-the-ground realities and lived experience.

## HOW FORTERRA AND ESDRR DEFINES RESILIENCE

The capacity of a community to understand its unique key challenges, such as income disparity, housing, and mental health challenges, and be empowered to address environmental issues through community leadership and collaboration despite these barriers. It involves strong communication systems, meaningful community connectedness, and geography-based emergency planning. Resilience must consistently be grounded in accessibility and interconnectedness.



### Key Feedback

Key community feedback from the engagement sessions highlighted continuous barriers to emergency response and preparedness. Community members emphasized the need to plan on a valley-wide scale, identified flooding and isolation as primary risks, and highlighted the vulnerability of low-income and unhoused populations. The discussion strongly supported a decentralized, zone-based hub model to address geographic isolation during disasters and emphasized the need for interconnected yet self-sufficient hubs. Some community members were particularly concerned that the purpose of this project was to bring people from Seattle/King County into Skagit County during emergencies and were openly antagonistic during the workshop.

Additionally, community members identified key gaps in shared emergency information, challenges related to homelessness, and critical infrastructure needs such as power generation, communications equipment, cold-weather shelter, and food storage. They also expressed strong interest in clearer, unimpeded evacuation routes, improved signage, and more effective communication tools and strategies. Other concerns included the annual tourist season and the need for better ways to inform visitors about local risks, hazards, and emergency plans while in the area, for example, by placing QR codes at key businesses and trailheads.



### Continued Planned Work

To establish more accessible emergency preparedness measures, key next steps include finalizing and implementing a community emergency plan that addresses different risks and needs by geographic zones and varying community priorities. There is a need to strengthen emergency communication through emergency preparedness guides that are accessible to community members, individual preparedness guides, and formal evacuation route information. As the population increases, consistent community education events can prepare new community members who are unfamiliar with emergency protocols to understand set plans and evacuation routes.



# IT TAKES A VILLAGE

This report summarizes findings from a collaboration between two aligned organizations, Alimentando Al Pueblo and Burien Collaborative's mini-grant for work conducted between April 2025 and September 2025. Through a series of workshops, resource-sharing events, and targeted engagement activities, Alimentando al Pueblo and Burien Collaborative engaged housed and unhoused residents of Burien, Washington, as well as local service providers. The project focused on understanding community needs related to climate impacts, emergency preparedness, and access to resilience resources, particularly for Latine and unhoused populations who are disproportionately affected by disasters and extreme weather. Engagement activities were designed to share accessible preparedness information, gather community feedback, and elevate community voices to inform future resilience planning efforts.

The primary purpose of the project was to center the voices of Burien's most vulnerable communities in local resilience planning and to document their needs, priorities, and lived experiences related to climate change and disasters. Alimentando Al Pueblo and Burien Collaborative participated despite the project being outside its traditional scope because of growing concern about climate impacts, gaps in local emergency planning, and the disproportionate burden disasters place on low-income, renter, immigrant, and unhoused communities.

## HOW ITAV DEFINE RESILIENCE

An understanding key community needs and priorities including food security, child and family support, health and hygiene, safety and shelter, communication, and transportation accessibility to strengthen a community's ability to respond to emergency events. Resilience must be grounded in public awareness, community preparedness, compassion, and lived experience.



## Activities Conducted

Alimentando al Pueblo and Burién Collaborative conducted 5 primary engagement activities. Coming into this project, ITAV already had a trusted presence in Southeast Seattle neighborhoods through established partnerships with other community groups, local schools, and cultural networks; maintained a strong volunteer base; and had experience hosting culturally centered events that build trust and attract high turnout. ITV conducted 11 engagement events over the course of the project, including:

- + **A Thanksgiving Community Dinner resilience workshop and listening session** that discussed food and supply distribution through hands on activities and games and helped design evacuation plans and emergency supply lists.
- + **A Christmas Celebration resilience workshop and listening session** that included facilitated conversations and games to explore disaster scenario navigation, food and supply distribution, and attendee discussions on ideal locations and how to access services in disasters.
- + **A Kwanzaa Celebration resilience workshop and survey** that focused on identifying essential supplies, communication strategies, and ways to stay connected to loved ones during disasters.
- + **Survey promotion at the MLK March** that helped ensure a widespread assessment of community preparedness levels, information sources, and preferences for hub locations and services.
- + **A soil testing workshop, listening session, and survey** that centered on climate, soil health, and resilience strategies, tying environmental justice to disaster preparedness.
- + **A youth event** with surveys and focus groups discussing climate and leadership.
- + **An Easter Egg Hunt** that engaged families in conversations about preparedness while distributing surveys in Spanish, Farsi, Vietnamese, Amharic, Mandarin, Arabic, Somali, and English.
- + **A May Conference survey and focus group** facilitated discussions around climate and sustainability practices while providing a major opportunity to distribute surveys and preparedness messaging, particularly to the elderly.
- + **A Juneteenth Celebration resilience workshop and listening session** provided Red Cross training on first aid, facilitated food and supplies giveaways, and offered food cycle education tailored to the Black community.
- + **July engagement and listening sessions** provided resources and printed materials as well as demonstrations on disaster preparedness, with a particular focus on children and household supplies giveaway.
- + **A Halloween Event and survey** that featured entertainment, a food and supply giveaway, and emergency preparedness kit distribution to reinforce practical steps families can take in emergencies.



## Key Feedback

Across engagement activities, community priorities included food security, family support, health and hygiene, safety and shelter, and transportation. ITAV recommended that future grants should fund translation and interpretation services to improve accessibility, given that language barriers were a significant need over the course of engagement. Most residents also lacked basic disaster readiness knowledge, such as access to relevant information, highlighting the need for more frequent education. While ITAV saw strong engagement turnout, limited staff and resources constrained engagement through follow-up conversations, underscoring capacity limitations. ITAV recommended that more support is needed for capacity funding for community-based organizations, and that small capital support for hub pilot sites should be provided.



## Continued Planned Work

ITAV plans to continue public education through workshops, resource fairs, and culturally tailored training. They also intend to develop a pilot hub model with dedicated areas for food, health, communications, and family services. ITAV noted the need to secure additional funding to develop this structure, expand marketing and communication, obtain food and supplies, and continue expanding language access and transportation support. ITAV will also formalize partnerships with emergency agencies and local governments to build capacity for hub operations and community outreach.



# KITSAP COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management (KCDEM) coordinates disaster preparedness, response, and recovery efforts, engaging volunteers and partners to help the County respond effectively to emergencies and engages with community throughout Kitsap County. KCDEM conducted RCPG Resilience Hubs project engagement in the City of Bremerton from August 2024 to October 2025 in efforts to build community awareness, promote preparedness, and receive community input for earthquake resilience planning. The City of Bremerton was identified as a focus area by KCDEM as it is divided into two sections and connected by two bridges that span the Washington Narrows. KCDEM anticipates that both bridges will be severely damaged after a major earthquake which will lead to two islanded, or disconnected, cities in Bremerton. The primary goals for this project were to introduce the resilience hub concept to the public, provide emergency preparedness education, and identify potential locations for a future resilience hub. Specifically, KCDEM focused on building and strengthening partnerships with local institutions and service providers on the west side of Bremerton. KCDEM plans to continue this work on the east side of Bremerton and expand the reach of preparedness information across Bremerton, as well as with other communities across Kitsap County including Poulsbo and Port Orchard.



## HOW KCDEM DEFINE RESILIENCE

Strengthening community awareness and emergency preparedness while actively incorporating community input into earthquake disaster resilience planning. Resilience can address and strengthen gaps in community-identified resources including accessibility to food, shelter, and communication.



## Activities Conducted

Engagement activities were implemented through a layered approach that combined structured, large-scale events with informal, community-facing outreach including the following:

- + **Community Kick Off Presentation:** An open public meeting introduced the resilience hub concept and earthquake preparedness while gathering initial community input on priority resources, services, and skills needed during emergencies through presentations and breakout discussions.
- + **Public Survey Monkey:** An online survey collected community feedback on disaster concerns, preparedness levels, and preferred information and training needs, which provided a baseline for diving deeper during in-person engagement.
- + **Monthly Community Outreach Meetings:** A series of recurring monthly public meetings enabled deeper discussion on preparedness topics, potential hub locations, and resource needs, allowing participants to refine priorities and guide subsequent outreach efforts.
- + **Information Table at Bremerton Farmer's Market:** One-on-one engagement at the farmer's market expanded outreach beyond formal meetings, providing emergency preparedness information, gathering informal feedback, and promoting upcoming trainings and events.
- + **Ready Bremerton 2025:** A large public preparedness fair brought together local agencies and organizations to educate residents, increase awareness

of emergency resources, and strengthen interagency relationships.

- + **Public Training Classes:** A series of preparedness and response trainings included general disaster preparedness and first aid with practical skills to improve individual and household readiness.
- + **Successful Partnership with Olympic College:** As part of this work, Olympic College has formally agreed to serve as the base of operation for the West Bremerton Resiliency Hub.





## Key Feedback

Key community feedback included an emphasis on widespread awareness of earthquake risk and strong desire for earthquake-focused preparedness information. Across meetings and surveys, residents consistently named the same 5 essentials needed in a future resilience hub that include water, food, shelter, communication, and medical care. Training and education emerged as primary community needs, and residents requested disaster preparedness workshops, first aid training, CERT courses, and more frequent public information events. Additionally, during the project, KCDEM identified an abandoned water storage tank in Bremerton that will be refurbished and returned to service to support community water needs during a disaster. Key lessons highlight the need for coordination and shared planning, as earlier alignment with regional partners and awareness of parallel efforts could have expanded reach, avoided duplication, and improved project impact.



## Continued Planned Work

This project sparked significant new partnerships and strengthened local emergency networks. Olympic College, the Bremerton Food Bank, and multiple local agencies formed or expanded relationships that will be critical for future emergency response. The project also laid the groundwork for an annual preparedness fair and ongoing community training, and the Ready Bremerton Disaster Preparedness Fair is scheduled again for September 2026. Additional courses are already scheduled, and other cities, such as Poulsbo, have expressed interest in building on this work.





REFUGEE & IMMIGRANT  
SERVICES NORTHWEST

*Serving refugees and immigrants since 1977.*

# REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT SERVICES NORTHWEST

Refugee and Immigrant Services Northwest (RISNW) is a refugee-led organization that supports immigrants and refugees across multiple counties in Northwest Puget Sound. RISNW provides culturally and linguistically appropriate services that promote self-sufficiency and community integration. The organization serves communities with limited access to emergency and disaster preparedness information.

The RISNW's resilience hub initiative was designed to increase awareness of emergency scenarios and strengthen preparedness among immigrant and refugee communities in Snohomish, Skagit, and Whatcom Counties.

Through its ongoing partnership with the Snohomish County Department of Emergency Management, RISNW received the highest grant award to engage 10 cultural-linguistic communities in Snohomish County, including Spanish-speaking Latine, Cambodian, Vietnamese, Congolese, Haitian, Afghan, Chuukese and Marshallese, Ukrainian, and Russian communities.



## Activities Conducted

The primary purpose of this project was to understand how communities access information and resources during emergency events. Specifically, this focused on communication and accessibility for diverse communities that communicate in many languages. The activities aimed at engaging directly with community members, and RISNW considered accessible, community-specific needs to inform a more equitable, culturally responsive outreach efforts for resilience hub planning. RISNW staff worked with the Snohomish County Department of Emergency Management to develop and modify presentation and outreach materials for the culturally and linguistically diverse participants. The project included 4 primary engagement events for each of the 10 languages that ran from November 2024 to September 2025.

- + **Resilience Hub Kick Off Event:** The kickoff event introduced resilience hubs and provided an introductory and foundational overview of disaster preparedness to a diverse group of community members throughout Snohomish County.
- + **Introductory Workshops on Emergency Preparedness:** This activity consisted of 8 group workshops held over 6 days and engaged with approximately 97 participants. The workshops provided a deeper understanding of disaster and emergency preparedness, specifically focusing on resource gaps and communication methods. Key themes in this engagement activity included first aid, CPR, food accessibility, and reinforcing strong social networks.
- + **Follow-up on Previous Sessions:** This follow-up workshop session was a less structured open discussion reiterating some of the previous engagement topics discussed. The conversation allowed participants to expand on challenges and lived experiences to strengthen trust and relationships with the project staff.
- + **Final Activity Session:** The final engagement activity focused on hands-on preparedness through emergency kit education and distribution. A total of 108 participants were provided with 120 kits across the project.

## HOW RISNW DEFINES RESILIENCE

Strengthening refugee and immigrant community awareness and emergency preparedness while actively incorporating culturally appropriate community input into earthquake disaster resilience planning. Resilience strengthens emergency preparedness gaps in community awareness in immigrant communities throughout Snohomish County.



### Key Feedback

Engagement activities continued to enforce the need for strong communication within and between these communities. Key feedback from engagement sessions demonstrated a strong interest in learning about emergency preparedness and information sharing. Engagement sessions highlighted the importance of culturally responsive and accessible engagement efforts especially with rapidly growing immigrant communities.

Participants value culturally appropriate food options and long-shelf-life supplies. Community and businesses played an important role in the success of the event and resulted in increased participants over time and showed a result of the project's preparedness throughout the engagement activities.

Although successful, creating safe and interactive engagement spaces for diverse communities continues to be an ongoing challenge. It is important to implement accessible opportunities like smaller engagement sessions and breakout groups to be most effective. Larger multilingual presentations were found less effective and required more effort while reducing comprehension.



### Continued Planned Work

Future project efforts should prioritize key findings and accessible and sustainable relationship-based engagement with a diverse immigrant, refugee, and Pacific islander communities. This includes continuing to interact with smaller groups "Face to Face" and utilizing trusted partners and appropriate language interpreters and guides. Additionally, utilizing smaller breakout sessions facilitated by RISNW staff encourages individuals to participate in group discussions.

The community recommended a tiered approach to disseminating emergency information by contacting trusted leaders ahead of the public since they will be contacted by their communities for guidance. Identifying and incorporating those trusted leaders into the emergency communications network as primary points of contact would greatly improve disaster preparedness efforts. Overall, training sessions should be customized to meet the needs of community members and delivered in a culturally appropriate manner providing accessibility and building trust. RISNW and Snohomish County Department of Emergency Management will continue to host community outreach sessions (one per quarter in 2026) around this topic.



# YƏHAŴ INDIGENOUS CREATIVES COLLECTIVE

The yəhaw Indigenous Creatives Collective collaborated to design an Indigenous Arts Center to serve as a resilience hub for Coast Salish communities. The yəhaw Indigenous Creatives Collective is a community of intertribal artists with 2 acres of land in the Rainier Beach neighborhood of Seattle on Coast Salish territories. yəhaw Indigenous Creatives Collective supports Indigenous artists by reconnecting with land and creating equitable, well-paid creative opportunities that center women, Two Spirit, and youth artists.

The Community Vision: Building Resilient Arts Center engagement activities sought to understand how an art center can function as a trusted and resilient community resource. The engagement activities focused on understanding the needs of the community and how a space like this can function as collective resistance during emergency and disaster events. The activities also aimed to ensure that planning included and reflected lived experiences, local values, and community priorities.



## Activities Conducted

Engagement aimed to gather community input on how the arts center could function as a successful resilience hub during emergencies, while elevating the voices of frontline and underrepresented communities to ensure culturally grounded and inclusive strategies. Through discussions and community visioning activities, participants shared ideas about programming, accessibility, safety, and the center's role as a gathering and support space during crises, fostering dialogue, shared understanding, and meaningful community influence on the project. Activities used to engage the community included the following.

- + **Facilitated Group Discussions:** Community members were engaged in conversations and shared experiences, concerns, and ideas about an art center. Ideas included how the arts center would serve the community and support resilience, connection, and emergency preparedness.
- + **Community Design Workshops:** Visioning activities invited community members to provide feedback and imagine what the art center can provide for daily emergencies.
- + **Interactive Feedback and Idea Sharing:** Community participants were encouraged to provide input on programming, accessibility, cultural relevance, and potential emergency uses with open discussion prompts.
- + **Relationship-Building and Trust-Based Engagement:** The engagement emphasized listening and dialogue in a welcoming environment, reinforcing trust and ensuring that community members felt heard and valued in shaping future planning and design decisions.

## HOW YƏHAW' INDIGENOUS CREATIVES COLLECTIVE DEFINES RESILIENCE

Rooted in collaborative, Indigenous led design that intentionally centers Indigenous communities and values in the space where members can create their own art, collaborate with one another, and share knowledge. Resilience is the ability to establish a communication hub and strengthen relationships with other organizations for resource sharing and emergency response coordination.



### Key Feedback

For planning purposes, the data in the report focused on Indigenous respondents representing the community served, but other key takeaways from non-Native individuals who also engaged in the survey were included where relevant. Key feedback emphasized that the Indigenous Art Center should be a place for healing, learning, and mutual support. Community members highlighted the importance of Indigenous values in the space and cultivating a space where members can make their own art, collaborate with one another, and share knowledge. Many community members emphasized the need for the space to feel welcoming and safe, including ideas to use the space in a studio-like fashion and lead activities focused on preserving and reclaiming ancestral plant knowledge and traditional art practices.

Emergency preparedness within the community space was also assessed. During emergencies, community members identified that they would like the space to be accessible and provide clean water, food, and basic first aid. Additionally, community members expressed the need to develop a communication hub and strengthen relationships with other organizations for resource sharing and emergency response coordination.



### Continued Planned Work

Future project efforts should prioritize the top resilience hub priorities identified by community members including emergency supplies storage, solar energy and backup power, and water capture and filtration systems. Non-Indigenous respondents wanted to also prioritize northwest native plants across their site and wetlands restoration, co-working space for Indigenous artists, artist-designed play space for children, rentable event space for BIPOC community, and outdoor public art and sculpture garden. Overall, the vision for this resilience hub is to thoughtfully address the diverse needs of the community to create a space that is sustainable, safe, and useful for both everyday use and emergencies.