

# Advancing Equitable Partnerships: Frontline Community Visions for Coastal Resiliency Knowledge Co-Production, Social Cohesion, and Environmental Justice

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at the Columbia Climate School**

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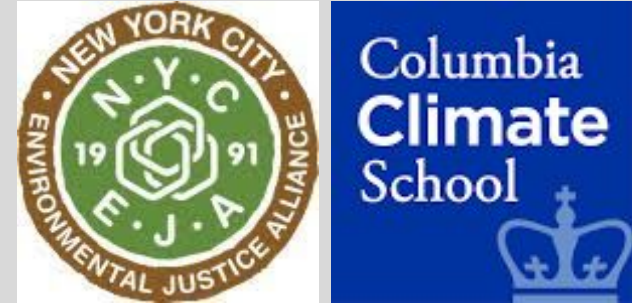
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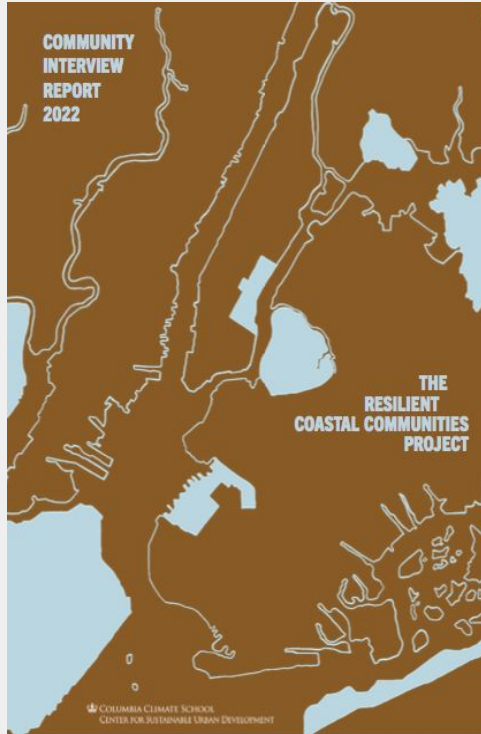


# The Resilient Coastal Communities Project (RCCP)

- Partnership between the Columbia Climate School and the New York City Environmental Justice Alliance
- Addresses the challenges of coastal resilience through:
  - Engaged research
  - Support for community empowerment in public planning
  - Publications, workshops & other convenings
  - Advances Columbia's Fourth Purpose by bringing our research to bear on critical issues in real time



# Lessons from Past Planning Exercises



(1) How have you/your community experienced climate change impacts like hurricanes, flash flooding, or extreme heat/heatwave-related issues in your community?

(2) What, if anything, is being done in your community about these climate change-related concerns and by whom? Which have been the most equitable and fair and how was this achieved?

(3) Have you/your organization participated in climate adaptation/resilience planning in the past?  
(a) Overall, did you find the planning processes to be inclusive, fair, and equitable?

(4) How do you think we can make future planning more responsive to your community's needs? What kinds of projects would you like to see happen and why?

(5) What have you found useful in creating resilience in your community?  
(a) What does resilience look like in your community and what aspects of that are important to you? (This can include climate resiliency, coastal resiliency, and community/social resiliency)

(6) Are climate impacts intersecting with other challenges in your community?

(7) What future do you imagine for your community with resources and resilience?  
(a) What resources and support do you and your organization need to participate effectively in future planning initiatives around coastal resilience?

(8) Is there anything you would like to share/discuss that we haven't touched on today?

\* El Puente, GOLES, Guardians of Flushing Bay, Ironbound Community Corporation, Newtown Creek Alliance, New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance, RISE, Staten Island Urban Center, The Point CDC, UPROSE.

# RCCP Research Findings: Community Expertise Is Invaluable, Yet Systematically Marginalized

1. Communities have knowledge agencies lack
2. Many community-based groups already have sophisticated resilience-related plans
3. Most communities have little access to or trust in agency leaders
4. Communities are frustrated at being sidelined in planning (yet remain eager to collaborate)

Newtown Creek Alliance (NCA)	Newtown Creek 2018 Vision Plan	Riverkeeper	Industrial resilience, better shorelines, community connection, stormwater solutions, green infrastructure, planning, wildlife, clean water
Rockaway Initiative for Sustainability and Equity (RISE)	Greater Rockaway Community and Shoreline Enhancement Plan	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	Youth employment; green economy; community stewardship; and education and awareness
Staten Island Urban Center (SIUC)	Maritime Education, Recreation, and Cultural Corridor	Staten Island Foundation	Enhance waterfront area of Staten Island's north shore
The Point Community Development Corp. (The Point CDC)	South Bronx Community Resiliency Agenda	Kresge Foundation; NYC Environmental Justice Alliance (NYC-EJA)	Support community resilience capacity building projects
United Puerto Rican Organization of Sunset Park (UPROSE)	Green Resilient Industrial District (GRID)	Protect Our Working Waterfront Alliance (POWWA)	A just transition toward green development for Sunset Park

# Community Engagement: Performative Or Transformative?

## Up next for RCCP: The *Fair and Accountable Spaces Project*

- identify and share the characteristics of collaborative spaces that can support climate adaptation planning through dialogue, accountability, and shared leadership.
- explore effective ways to communicate community needs, engage diverse stakeholders, and leverage these interactions to sustain collaboration.
- Interview both community leaders and agency planners, to develop approaches to collaboration based on a synthesis of diverse stakeholder perspectives.
- Foster a paradigm shift towards inclusive, participatory, and community-driven approaches in climate adaptation planning. |

# Necessary Conditions for Just, Effective Resilience Planning

- *Is there a **strong legal framework** requiring collaboration?*
- *Is there **funding** for effective community participation?*
- *Have **agreed-upon goals** been established?*
- *Is **enough time** being made available to plan collaboratively?*
- *Are provisions in place for **continuing engagement** after plans are made and resilience measures are being built?*

Perhaps the most essential condition for meaningful collaboration is that planning officials consider it to be **worth the effort**.

# A Vision for Centering Justice In Resilience Planning

- Essential **information is accessible** to all
- *“The deeper context and source of what we might call resiliency is our being able to imagine a future that we ourselves are not just existing but thriving in, and that we ourselves and our community are creating, and recreating, and continuing to develop.”*
- Sustained **funding is provided** to support all stakeholders
- **Effective stakeholder networks and partnerships are created,** and maintained, to empower and elevate frontline communities
- **Productive and supportive spaces, are fostered to promote the listening, learning, and accountability and trust needed for effective collaborative planning**
- *and integrity, love and compassion... that really comes from a deep commitment to love and to compassion.” (El Puente)*
- Frontline Communities **see themselves in each completed resilience plan** and support its funding and implementation

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