

ExhibitAExecutiveSummary

Applicant: The State of Connecticut

Filename: ExhibitAExecutiveSummary

Connecticut must address its climate change vulnerabilities, starting with the protection of over 600 miles of coastline. 95% of the population resides within 50 miles of the coast. 64% of the state's insured property is located in the coastal area. \$542 billion in assets are at risk to coastal storms and flooding. With the vital transportation links of I-95 and the Northeast Corridor vulnerable to flooding, the economies of the State and the entire region from New York to Boston rely upon the infrastructure along the Connecticut coast.

In response to Sandy, the State is taking sweeping action to restructure its policies, programs and plans to prepare for, protect against and most importantly live with the impacts of climate change. In perhaps its boldest statement of change, the Governor has established and made permanent through executive order the State Agencies Fostering Resilience (SAFR) and charged SAFR with the responsibility of creating the **Statewide Resilience Roadmap**. SAFR's mission is to craft policies that equitably promote resilience across its impacted region and the entire State. SAFR has established two key principles that form the foundation of its resilience mission: Resilient Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Zones and Resilient Infrastructure Corridors.

Integrating transit-oriented development into the resilience framework will build communities that are safe, resilient to climate change and focused on sustainable solutions.

Connecticut is investing heavily in its transportation systems, building new stations and increasing service to deliver greater mass transit opportunity and reduce automobile dependency. This fundamental shift in land use policy is in recognition that Connecticut's growth is inhibited by sprawl and congestion, and that its economic future relies upon sustainable, energy efficient development that seeks to reduce carbon emissions.

Resilient corridors connect people and places and create opportunities for ecological and economic investment that will secure our vulnerable communities. Taking advantage of the unique

geological ridgelines and high ground in the State, resilient corridors provide access to safe ground, opportunity for new infrastructure technologies, concentrated land use development patterns, security for vulnerable infrastructure such as energy, sanitary and stormwater systems and new opportunities for integrating natural systems into our built environment. Combined, resilient TOD and resilient corridors form the foundation of Connecticut's resilience roadmap.

SAFR will test these principles through two pilot projects - the *Union Station Resilient TOD* in New Haven and the *South End East Resilient Network* in Bridgeport. These MID-URN communities suffer from flood damage from major tidal events, repetitive loss from flooding from rain events and power outages, resulting in downward spiraling economies, increasing vacancies and continued significant risk from future storm events. While proximate to their urban centers, they are isolated from their downtowns and have been cut-off from help during and after storm events. Without fundamental change, these coastal communities will continue to decline, leaving large gaps in the urban fabric and extending blight within these cities.

These pilots provide viable yet transformative solutions, not by cutting communities off from their connection to the water, but by establishing new paradigms for long-term sustainable growth through resilient TOD and resilient corridor approaches for living and flourishing with sea level rise in these dense, culturally significant and affordable/working class communities that the State cannot afford to abandon. Together with the project's proposed *CT Coastal Connections Resilience Plan*, these pilots will launch a statewide program for resilience that will be advanced through the implementation of resilience plans in vulnerable coastal areas with similar issues and challenges. These plans will form the basis for future resilience funding and action by the State that will integrate resilience principles into the State policy and funding structure, in keeping with SAFR's mission.

As you will see in this application, all SAFR Members and Partners have incorporated climate

change resilience into their core mission and programs. The State can boast significant leverage for projects that tie directly into the pilots in New Haven and Bridgeport and more importantly can point to specific new programs and collaborative actions that will fund the expansion of the effort beyond HUD funding to support the advancement of resilient solutions throughout the State.

SAFR recognizes that their resilience mission will be effective only if it is embraced by the public and supported by the key organizations that are working to combat climate change in the State. SAFR has executed a robust program of public engagement to ensure that its mission is embedded in local planning and aligned with public opinion. Building upon lessons learned in Rebuild by Design and numerous community resiliency processes, our outreach to prepare this application included over 50 consultations, five public hearings and open houses and municipal workshops, a project website, site visits, and social media campaigns. Once our pilots were selected, we reached out into our pilot communities with pop-up presentations to begin the process of developing a shared vision for adapting to climate change and building communities that are economic, environmentally and socially resilient. This NDRC grant will jumpstart the SAFR resiliency mission by illustrating real-life examples of resilient approaches to living with water that can be replicated along the coast and across the State. When we reached out to the 15 communities in our impacted region, all were responsive and wanted to proceed with resilient solutions. This grant will provide us with the foundation to move from our two pilots to an entire region, creating resilient solutions for small towns, mid-sized cities and riverine communities as well as our hard-hit urban neighborhoods. This grant will provide an active catalog of specific resilience projects that we will look to fund through the adaptation of our existing funding programs and the implementation of our new resilience-focused funding programs. This grant will provide a new level of integration that will embed our resilience mission into the natural goals and priorities of the State, creating a long-term and sustainable *Statewide Resilience Roadmap*.