

Community
Engagement in
Climate Action

Massachusetts
Municipal Association
Climate Series
April 30, 2024

lighting the way



new
bedford



New Bedford History

- Through the 17th century, the area now known as New Bedford was stewarded by the Wampanoag “People of the First Light”
- Colonists “purchased” land in 1652 – a foreign concept to the Native Americans – leading to conflict and suffering
- Whaling in New Bedford began in mid 1700s making the city the wealthiest per capita in 19th century – not everyone shared this wealth
- The fall of whaling introduced a century of textile and other manufacturing in late 1800s through 1900s and attracted many immigrants
- Worker housing was built around mill facilities
- Mills shut down and migrated south along with jobs
- Many residents live among Brownfields and Superfund sites with higher unemployment/low wages/language barriers remaining
- Recent immigrants make up much of the fish processing and marine cargo workforce

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Process – 2018

NB Resilient – 2020 New Bedford's Climate Action and Resilience Plan

Vision:

To make New Bedford a thriving, self-sustaining city that is physically, culturally, and economically secure and ready to implement innovative approaches to preparing for tomorrow's possibilities.

But: We cannot be truly resilient unless we are all resilient

New Bedford Harbor Vulnerability Assessments – 2021

Green Infrastructure Master Strategy and Implementation Roadmap – 2022



Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2024

- Past MHMP updates did not include:
- Climate Change
- Sea Level Rise
- Equity

- Since last update FEMA has added:
- Infectious Disease
- Invasive Species
- Vector-Borne Illness
- Changes to Groundwater



Lessons Learned (and still learning)

- Meet people where they are
- Acknowledge barriers and be inclusive
- Use social media effectively
- Listen and consider all feedback
- Consider all angles



Meet people where and when they are

Who's missing from the process
and how can you engage them?

Partner with Community-Based
Organizations

Join an existing meeting

Walk the neighborhood

Use social media



Terreno de Payne Elco -- 2 posibilidades

Possibilidad	Costo de construcción	Fuente de los fondos	Puestos de trabajo	Costo anual de mantenimiento
Negocios con invernaderos y parque en Coffin y Church Street	\$ 4.2 millones	Privado Posiblemente fondos públicos para el parque	23 Empleos de construcción 15-30 Empleos permanentes	Privado
Campo de fútbol rodeado de espacios verdes o parque pasivo a lo largo de Coffin Street	\$ 2.5 millones	Público	21 Empleos de construcción 15-30 Empleos permanentes	\$ 53,000/año

*Estimaciones de costos de órdenes de magnitud



Acknowledge barriers and be inclusive

- Know your audience
- Language is not an afterthought – be deliberate
- Make it family-friendly and engage the kids
- Get youth involved
- Real-time polling

Listen and consider all feedback (and pushback)

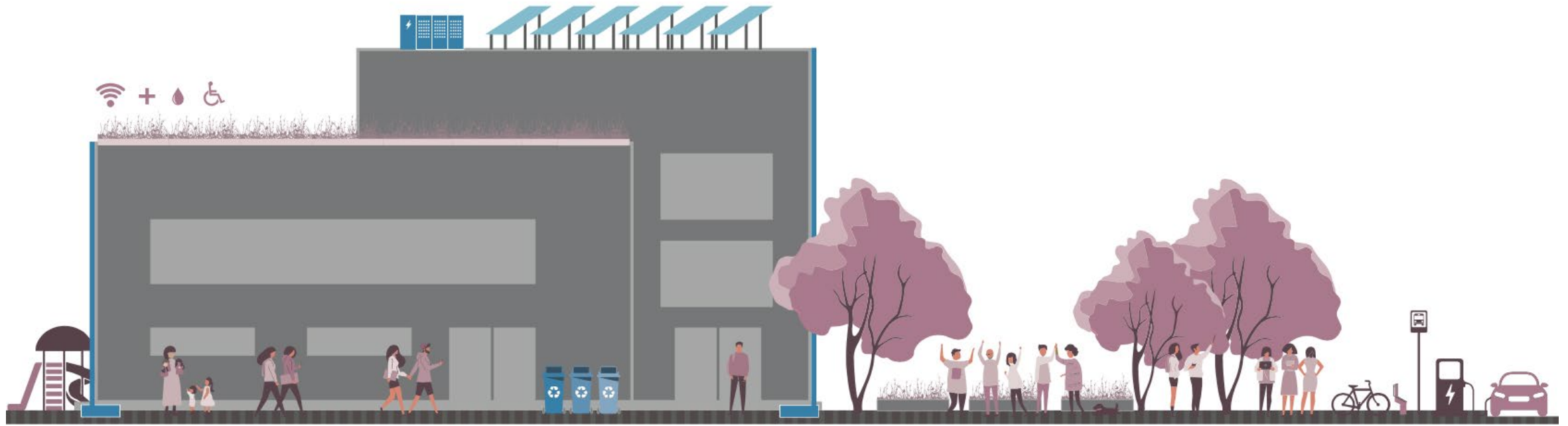
- Move at the speed of trust –
adjust as necessary
- Be sincere and follow up
- Peel the onion - layers



Consider all angles

- “Vulnerable populations” can be the most resilient – some are climate evacuees who have lived through trauma
- Consider potential climate events where residents’ families live
- Experiment – don’t fear failure





Resilience Hubs

Community-serving facilities augmented to increase community capacity focused on:

Services & Programming

Power

Communications

Operations

Building & Landscapes

New Bedford Now

- Celebrating and sustaining our position as the #1 Fishing Port in the U.S. and supporting the front-line workers who make it happen
- Redeveloping Brownfields to generate jobs and increase quality of life in all neighborhoods
- Embracing our culture and history and acknowledging lessons learned from past injury and trauma to our people and environment
- Remaining the City that Lit the World by promoting wind and other renewable energy to create sustainable jobs to become lifetime careers
- Finding and implementing clean and efficient energy solutions for energy burdened residents

lighting the way



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NB Resilient
New Bedford's
Climate Action and
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