



# Resilience Hubs in Action: *Cambridge Community Center*



Cambridge, MA, USA



## The Challenge

The Cambridge Community Center was founded in 1929 by a group of Black Pastors to create an inclusive space that responded to the growing inequalities and lack of opportunities in the community. Black community members living in Cambridge have faced a legacy of discriminatory policies and practices, limited access to economic resources, underinvestment, and lack of support that exacerbate their exposure and sensitivity to impacts from a changing climate.

## The Hub Approach



The Cambridge Community Center Resilience Hub actively supports the day-to-day wellbeing of members of the surrounding community via access to services and programming co-designed alongside the community. The hub offers a safe and trusted space where community members can gather, connect, participate in special events, and access resources they need. It focuses on increasing social connectivity and relationships while also providing training to prepare for disruptions. In the event of disruption, the site activates to “disruption mode” and provides space for temporary shelter, access to information, food, water, supplies, and power.

“The doors have never closed. The fact that generations of my family have been able to benefit from a safe environment... I have never worried about, are they being mistreated, are they being ignored, are they not getting the kind of warmth and love that I felt as a kid. I know I’m getting emotional but that’s it. This is a safe place to be.”

-- Miss G, life-long community member



## Five Foundational Area Successes



**Programming & Services.** The hub acts as a neighborhood food hub for community members, provides mental health services to teens and unique educational opportunities to youth.



**Communications.** The hub has computers and Wi-Fi accessible daily. During COVID, this was especially important for youth to access remote school. The site is being retrofitted with equipment to support deeper communication during a disruption.



**Building & Landscapes.** The building is getting upgraded including weatherization, energy efficiency retrofits, additional rooms for uses such as Pre-K care, an elevator, and a commercial kitchen for community members to utilize year-round.



**Power.** The hub is replacing the roof and adding rooftop solar panels and a battery backup system. This will increase building resilience and reduce expenses.



**Operations & Maintenance.** The hub's incredible staff are being trained in all three resilience modes. Additionally, the site is getting new lighting, ramps, audio systems, and an elevator to ensure accessibility for all.

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