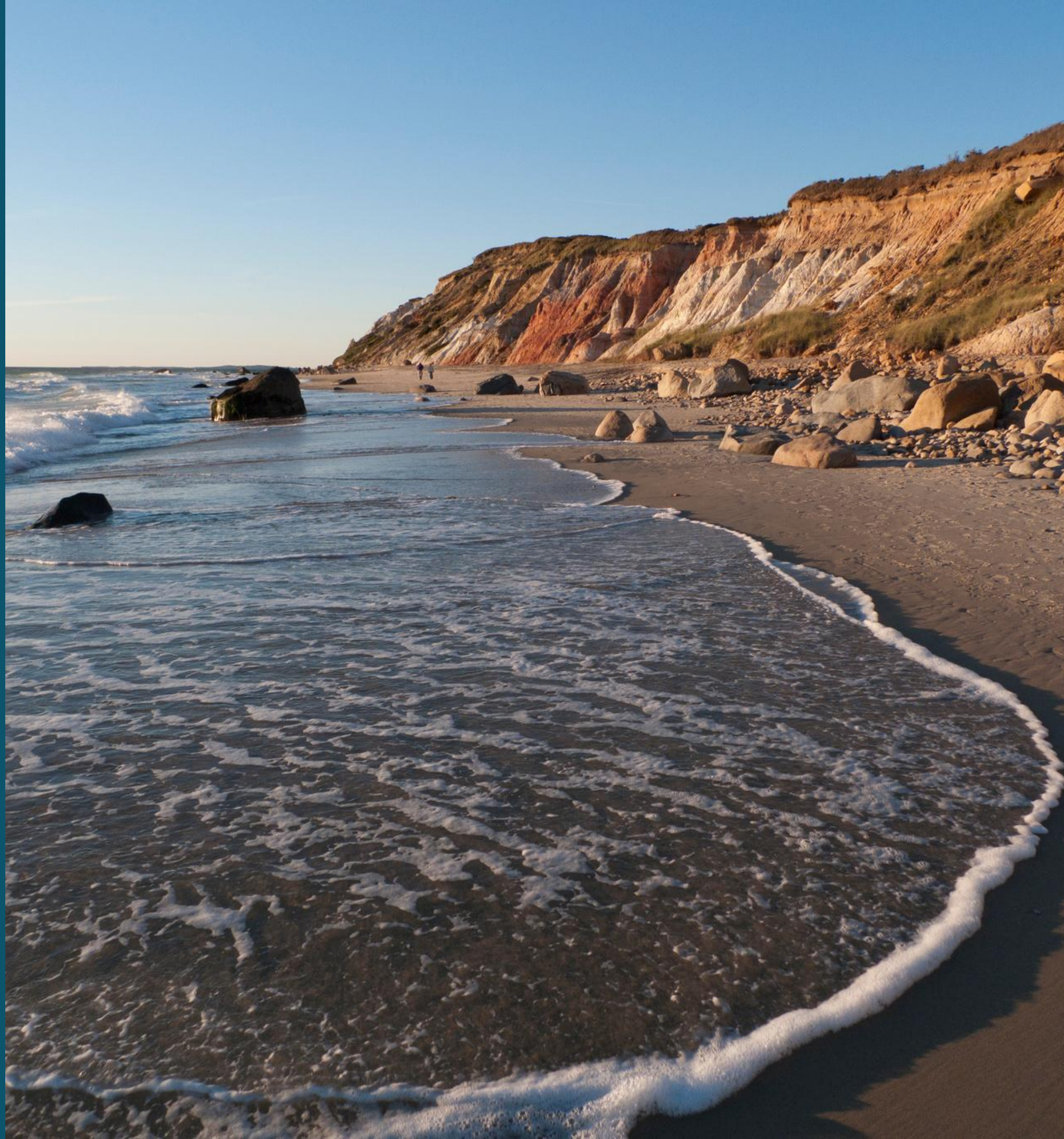


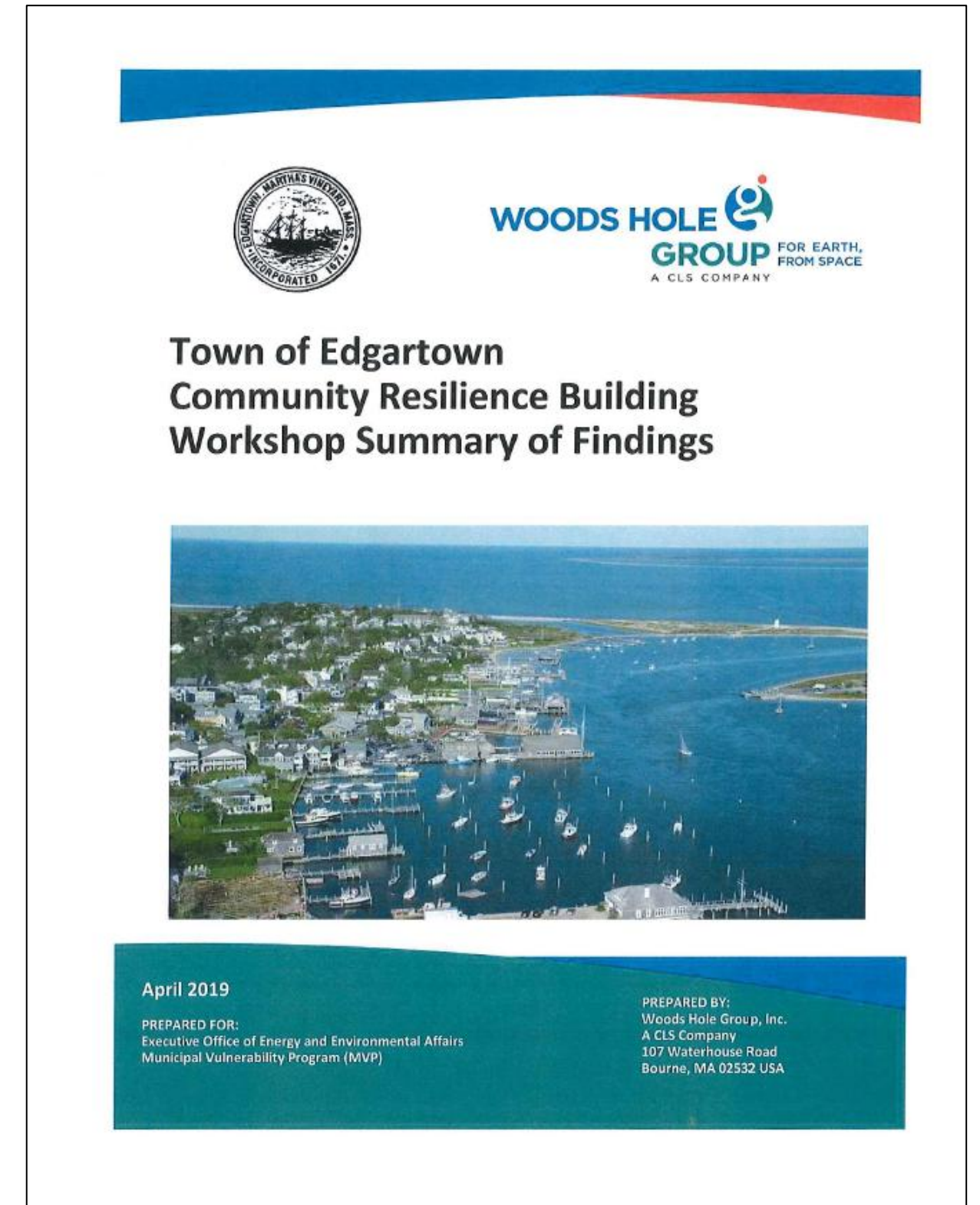
Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) 2.0

Meghan Gombos
October 2026



Background (2017-2020)

- All island towns went through MVP 1.0 Process
- Explored town vulnerability to impacts of climate change (Infrastructure, Environment, Social)
- Developed Suite of Priority Actions to Build Resilience





Review of MVP 1.0 Plans Statewide

Not enough emphasis on social component

Climate change will not affect us all equally, Some people are more vulnerable to climate impacts due to limited resources, health or economic challenges, or systemic barriers. So it is crucial that community resilience solutions be informed by people who will be most impacted.

MVP 2.0: Building Community Resilience

An island-wide approach to update town MVP plans focusing on improving social resilience.

Our Core Team

6

Town Liaisons, one from each town

4

Community Liaisons with ties to priority populations

Supported by an MVC project manager and planning vendor

Key Goals

- Identify and engage priority populations
- Understand their concerns and priorities
- Update Town MVP Plans with social resilience focus
- Launch \$50K seed projects (per town or island-wide)
- Maintain eligibility for future MVP Action Grants



Priority Populations

Economically Insecure

People experiencing low income and limited financial cushion are highly vulnerable, especially when floods or other events happen.

Vulnerable Livelihoods or Exposed to Extremes

People dependent on resources that are impacted (oceans, land), face economic risk tied to environmental changes, and/or are exposed to risk because of occupations.

Farmers and fishers · Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head Aquinnah · Descendants of Wampanoag Community · Outdoor workers · Emergency service providers

Housing Insecure

People who are homeless face heightened vulnerability during disruptions.

Cultural Communities or Political Marginalized Groups

Communities face systemic barriers that limit their access to resources and support, making them more vulnerable during disruptions.

Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head Aquinnah · Descendants of Wampanoag Community · Brazilian · People of Color · Jamaican · Haitian · Transient worker communities

Language Barriers

Non-English speaking communities face challenges communicating and receiving information.

Brazilian · Haitian · Other

Age Related Needs

People with unique age-related needs related to mobility, technology access, and daily support.

Older adults · Youth, children

Physically or Socially Isolated

People without transportation · Older adults in hard to access areas · Those who are socially isolated face reduced access to support · Those who lack technology have difficulty receiving or sharing important information · Returning from incarceration · New residents: hard to find medical/food

Physically or Intellectually Challenged

People with physical and or intellectual disabilities may have limited mobility, difficulty accessing transportation, or reliance on power for essential equipment.

Mental Health, Addiction, and Medically Challenges

People experiencing mental health challenges may be more isolated and less aware of available resources. Substance abuse issues.

Community Engagements

- Harbor Homes (Unhoused)
- Councils on Aging (Seniors)
- Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head Aquinnah
- Vineyard Independence Partnership (People living with disabilities)
- Adult Learning Program (English language learners)
- Brazilian Community
- DayBreak Gathering at Island Autism (People living with mental health challenges)
- Individuals living at Hillside Village (Low Income elderly and living with disabilities)
- Island Grown Initiative (Collaboration on Food System Resilience Project including food security/ farmers)
- Food Pantries (food insecure)
- The Red House (People living with addiction challenges)
- Isolated Individuals (e.g. Chappaquidick residents)

ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS



What We Heard



For many, losing power is scary.

Many households depend on a single power source for water, heat, medical equipment, and staying in touch, so one outage can knock out all of them at once.

“No power means no water and totally cut off from the big island.”



Transportation gaps leave people stranded.

When ferries stop, roads close, or long driveways go unplowed, food, health care, and social contact can disappear for days, especially for isolated people without a car or nearby family. *“When the boats stop running food runs out.”*



Changing land and water are hitting those who depend on them most.

Warming waters, declining pond health, shifting fish and herring runs, cliff erosion, and new pests are affecting farm yields, fishing, and Wampanoag traditional foods and harvesting practices. Ticks! *“We work outside all day and the ticks are everywhere, I worry about bringing them home to my kids.”*

What We Heard



Tight budgets make it hard to prepare.

Fixed incomes, low wages, and housing costs mean many people can't afford generators, heat pumps, insulation, or extra food. *"If you do not own your home on Martha's Vineyard you are homeless."*



Neighbors are the real safety net, and that net is thinning.

Fewer year-round residents and lost social spaces mean fewer people checking in. *"We are basically on our own unless we have family nearby." "We just exist. We are no longer social."*



Information isn't reaching everyone.

Language barriers, limited tech use, and low trust leave many people unsure what to expect or where to go. *"We need clear information about what to expect and how to prepare."*

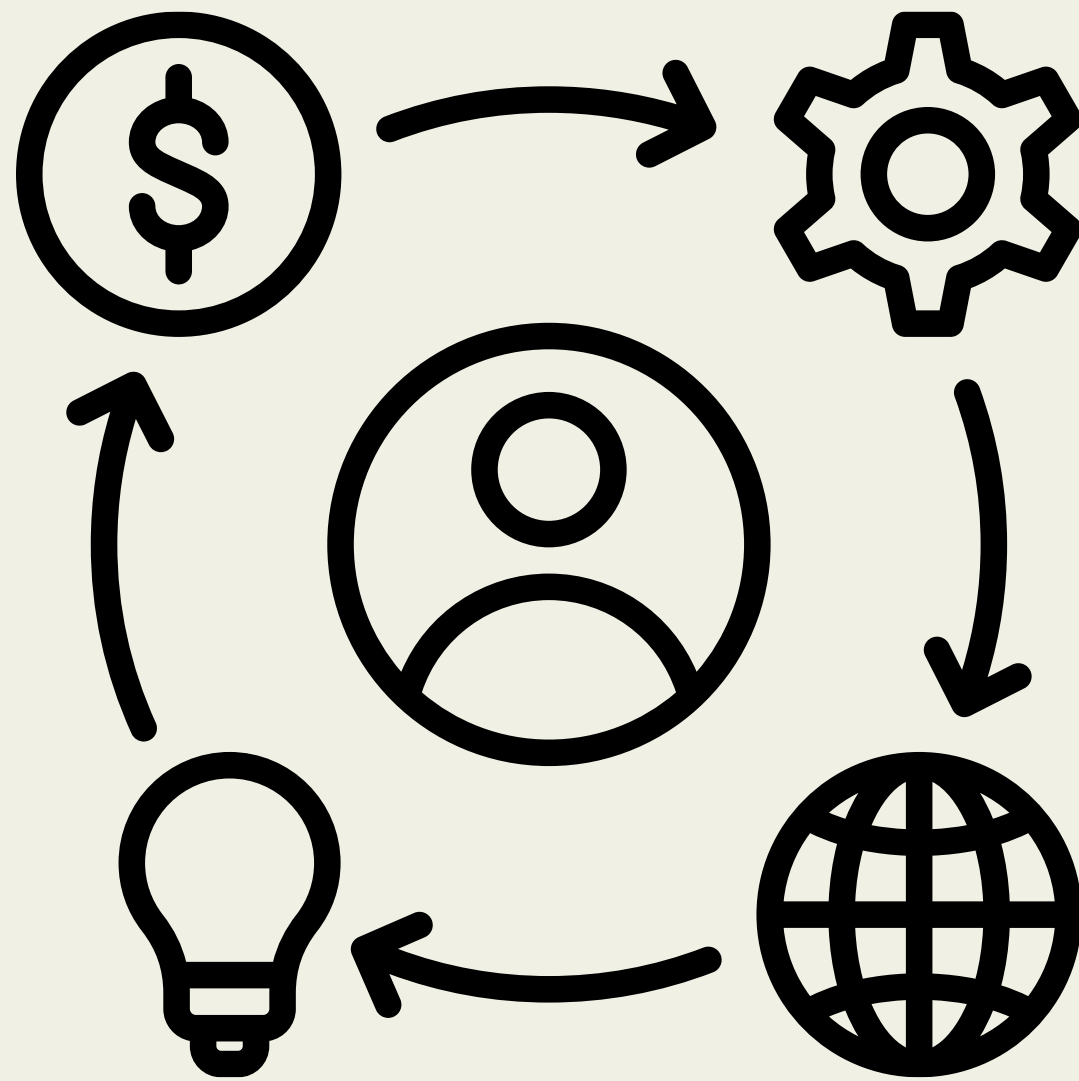
A photograph of a coastal road. In the foreground, there are orange and white striped traffic barrels. The road is paved and has a yellow sign with a black arrow pointing right. In the background, there are houses and a body of water. The sky is overcast.

SOCIAL RESILIENCE ACTION THEMES

Actions to Build Social Resilience (themes across populations)

-  1. Strengthen Emergency Shelter, Safe Spaces, and Basic Needs During Extreme Events
-  2. Mobilize Community-based Networks and Social Connections
-  3. Enhance Communication and Information Access for Emergencies and Climate Preparedness
-  4. Improve Transportation, Access, and Mobility
-  5. Increase Resilience of Environmental, Land, and Resource Management
-  6. Expand Energy Resilience and Backup Power
-  7. Advance Housing Stability and Affordability
-  8. Support Economic and Business Resilience
-  9. Strengthen Food Access, Distribution, and Emergency Supply Systems

SEED PROJECT DEVELOPMENT



- Each town ranked priorities and developed 2–3 seed project ideas
- \$50,000 per town, done in 10–11 months, **tied to engagement findings**
- Regional workshop explored ways for towns to collaborate

Final Seed Projects



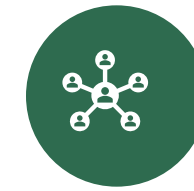
Edgartown: Chappaquiddick flooding

Edgartown is funding an engineering study to raise part of Chappaquiddick and reduce flooding.



Aquinnah: cultural burns

Aquinnah is partnering with the Aquinnah Cultural Center to build capacity for cultural burns that reduce ticks, invasive species, and wildfire risk while supporting biodiversity.



Regional resilience network

ISLAND-WIDE EFFORT!



Protecting the vulnerable, strengthening the whole community.



Shared challenges

Every town identified some of the same gaps: hard-to-reach residents, weakened social networks, limited emergency communications, and overstretched emergency management



Greater reach for less

Sharing one network costs less than six. Four towns committed full Seed funds; Aquinnah added partial funds and Edgartown its emergency budget.



A proven model

Bainbridge Island, WA built exactly this kind of network over 15 years. We don't have to start from scratch.

What can be achieved when we work together



MV Community Resilience Coordinator

Focused on reaching vulnerable populations and building social networks of volunteers that support formal emergency management systems. Support from a retired island EM, MVC, Town Climate Committees



Amplify Island-wide communication hub

One place for emergency contacts, shelters, checklists, and resources



Town-base shelter assessments and protocols

Template to assess shelter, identify gaps, and build communication and coordination protocols within Towns



Networking to reach vulnerable populations

Implement outreach and provide preparedness materials (checklists, stay-bags, contacts)



A shelter volunteer network

Build and island wide team of volunteers to man shelters



Ready Your Neighborhood pilots in 5 towns

Street-level networks where neighbors know neighbors and information flows fast when it matters



A path to sustainability

Fundraising strategy and long-term plan

An 11-month project, managed by the Martha's Vineyard Commission with guidance from a steering committee with town representation.



MEET OUR NEW

MV Community Resilience Coordinator

Kuan Yin Bissonnette

Intentional decision to move to the Island, to be closer to family and be a part of a smaller community

Leveraging 30+ yrs of professional experience to contribute to our community and meet people across a variety of populations



Thank You!

