

## Long-term Protection and Support for Housing, Communities

Housing is at risk as extreme weather events become more common, as infrastructure ages, and as funding becomes limited. Preparing intentionally for events like these is known as resilience planning. Effective resilience planning usually involves persuading public and private partners that upfront investing, such as higher building standards for housing, pays off in the long run.

A recent national event at, and state report out of, the University of Georgia (UGA) illuminates the gaps and resources in the state's capacity to prepare for and adapt to changing conditions, and to withstand and recover rapidly from disruptions. To build resilience across sectors, including housing, UGA recently hosted experts from 20 states in a nonpartisan national forum on resiliency. Academics, nonprofit experts, and private sector partners shared ideas on how to leverage nature and innovative infrastructure solutions. The [State Resilience Planning Group \(SRPG\) event](#) was convened by The Pew Charitable Trusts.

Presenters emphasized that resilience projects tend to succeed when their economic case is clear. By quantifying the benefits of these projects—such as higher property values, or reduced flood damage—state leaders can show legislators, communities, and private partners that resilience is a smart long-term investment.

## New Report: Innovation, Collaboration Can Boost Georgia Resilience

UGA's Institute for Resilient Infrastructure Systems (IRIS) also recently issued "[Georgia Statewide Resilience Assessment: Hazards, Challenges and Opportunities.](#)" This report found that the state can reduce vulnerability by building on a strong foundation of innovation and collaboration. The report draws on insights from more than 130 experts from utilities, local governments, emergency agencies, and regional commissions.

"We are pouring millions into housing projects, but we need to be designing these homes with resilience in mind, like the fortified home standard, so people have a home to come back to after a disaster," a stakeholder from Southeast Georgia describe in the challenges section of the report.

Coordinated resilience planning can proactively help protect Georgia's critical infrastructure such as housing from the costs and disruption of extreme weather. The recommendations include creation of a state-led planning initiative, networks to coordinate among jurisdictions and levels of government, data sharing to support better local decision-making, and updated infrastructure designed for future needs and conditions.

## Hurricane Helene Damage Catalyzed State Planning

In fall 2024, the historic devastation of Hurricane Helene included catastrophic flooding, punishing winds, and tornadoes in Georgia. The storm killed at least 37 people, left over 1 million without power, and destroyed \$5.5 billion worth of crops and timber. Across eastern Georgia, sustained winds of over 50 miles per hour destroyed hundreds of homes and buildings and damaged tens of thousands more across eastern Georgia.

[Georgia's House Study Committee on Disaster Mitigation and Resilience](#), which the state legislature had been approved and convened earlier in 2024, joined IRIS researchers in meetings with stakeholders across the state. The stakeholders included communities and businesses, emergency management and disaster response professionals, neighboring states, and academic and nonprofit experts. They examined how Georgia—with its growing population and economy—should approach resiliency when planning for and managing future extreme weather disasters.

The General Assembly took up a number of recommendations in the House committee's final report, including a [bill that directs the creation of a statewide resilience plan and office of resilience](#). The measure was not passed before the General Assembly adjourned, but the measure can be considered in the next legislative session in 2026.

## Creating Housing Resilience Through Nonprofit Investment

Resilience planning can help prevent the loss of housing by future adverse weather events. Promoting higher building standards and increasing upfront investment in housing structures helps to ensure that as few families as possible experience homelessness in the wake of a devastating storm. However, infrastructure upgrades and resilient new construction can be expensive investments for churches and nonprofits seeking to create emergency and transitional housing units. Grants from the Episcopal Community Foundation can provide critical funding for these efforts in our parish communities. [Learn more about ECF grant funding](#).

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### Sources

- [IRIS hosts Georgia Statewide Resilience Assessment Convening in Atlanta](#). (2025, April 10).
- [Resilience planning for the state of Georgia](#). (n.d.).
- Trusts, P. C. (2025, August 4). [Georgia needs innovative solutions and coordinated planning to build resilience](#). The Pew Charitable Trusts.



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