



Librarians as Leaders for Community Resiliency Collaborations



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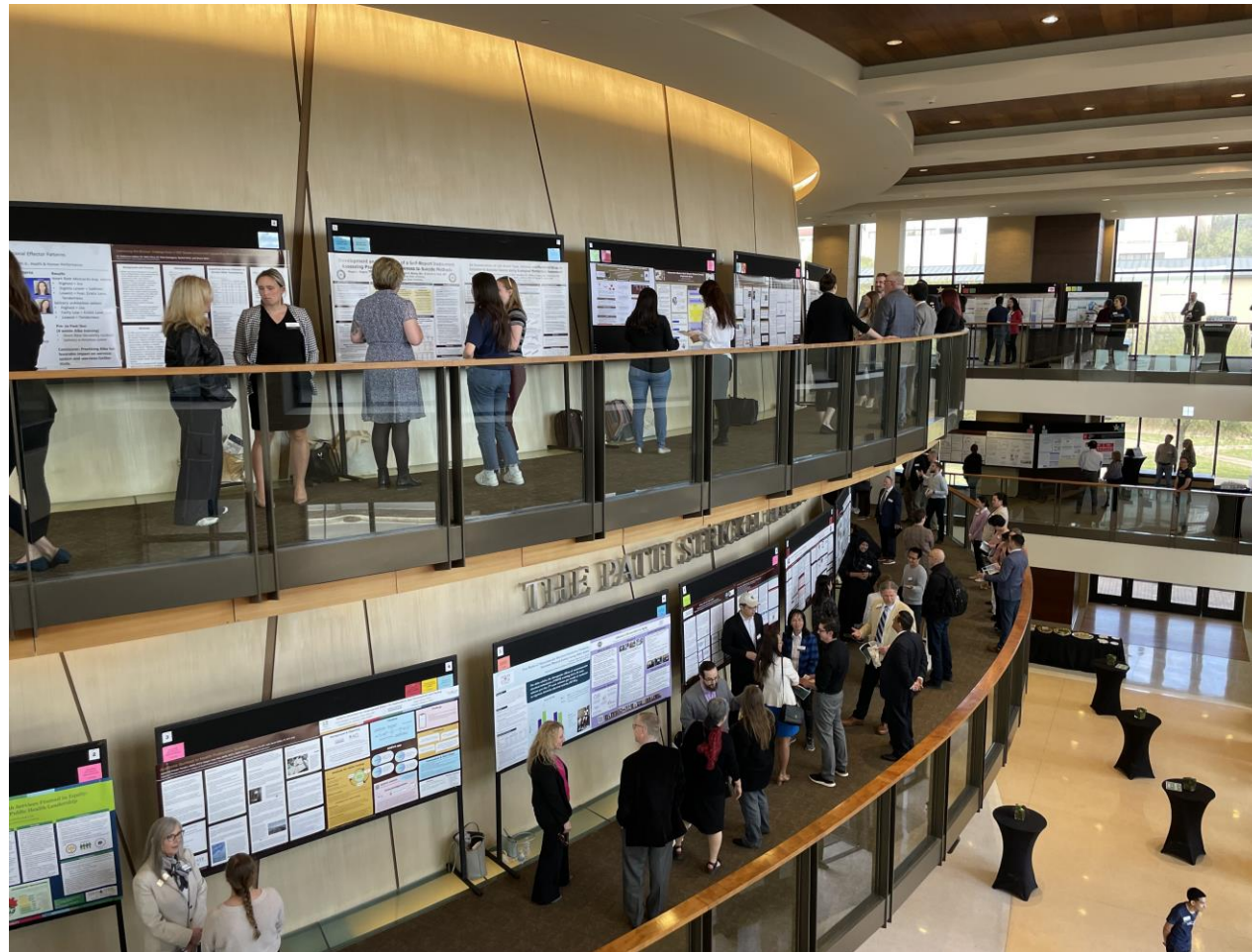
MEMBER THE TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

May 15, 2024

Translational Health Research Center at Texas State University



- Translational Health Research Center (THRC) conducts innovative research with campus and community partners, and we share promising practices from our research directly with the public.
- Fostering **Healthy and Resilient People and Places**

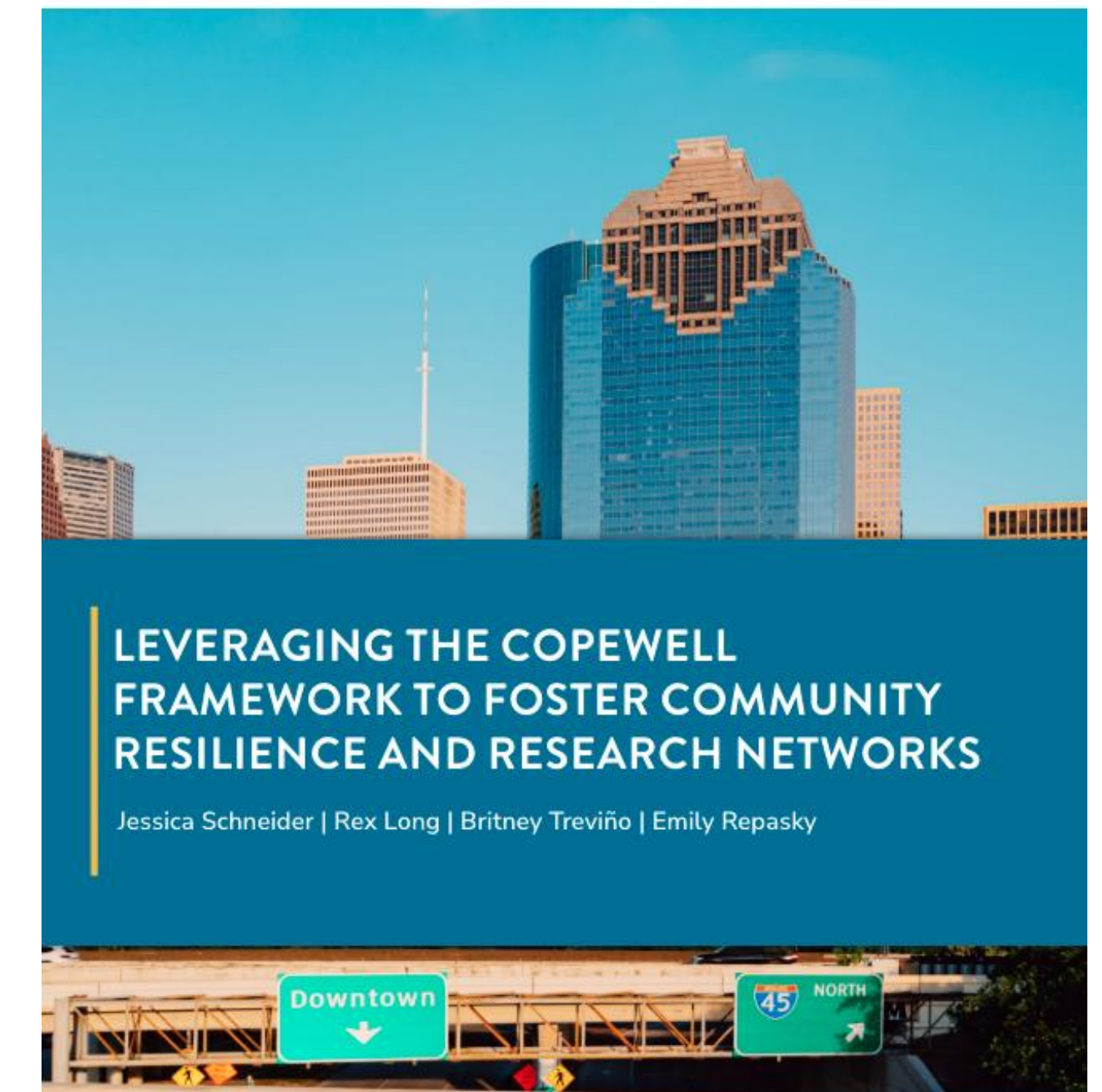


Connecting THRC, COPEWELL, and TSLAC

- **Summer 2022:** THRC begins working with the **COPEWELL (Composite of Post-Event Well-Being) framework** to develop translational research.
- **October 2022:** THRC and Johns Hopkins University host **two townhall webinars** on COPEWELL in Texas (which connects THRC to TSLAC).
- **December 2022:** THRC invites Dr. Elizabeth K. Eger to lead and design a community-based communication adaptation with Texas rural libraires with TSLAC.
- **January-December 2023:** Dr. Eger, Rex Long, and TXST student co-researchers conduct a pilot study with Texas rural libraries on COPEWELL.

TEXAS STATE
TRANSLATIONAL HEALTH
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HEALTHY + RESILIENT
PEOPLE + PLACES



Introducing Our Library Partnerships



We worked with **Maria Freed** from TSLAC to:

- **Send interest surveys** to TSLAC libraries to gauge interest in participating in pilot project.
- **Evaluate interested libraries** to select two **pilot sites** from 34 interested libraries.



Lee-Bardwell Public Library



312 W Pacific Avenue
Gladewater, TX 75645
Phone: 903-845-2640



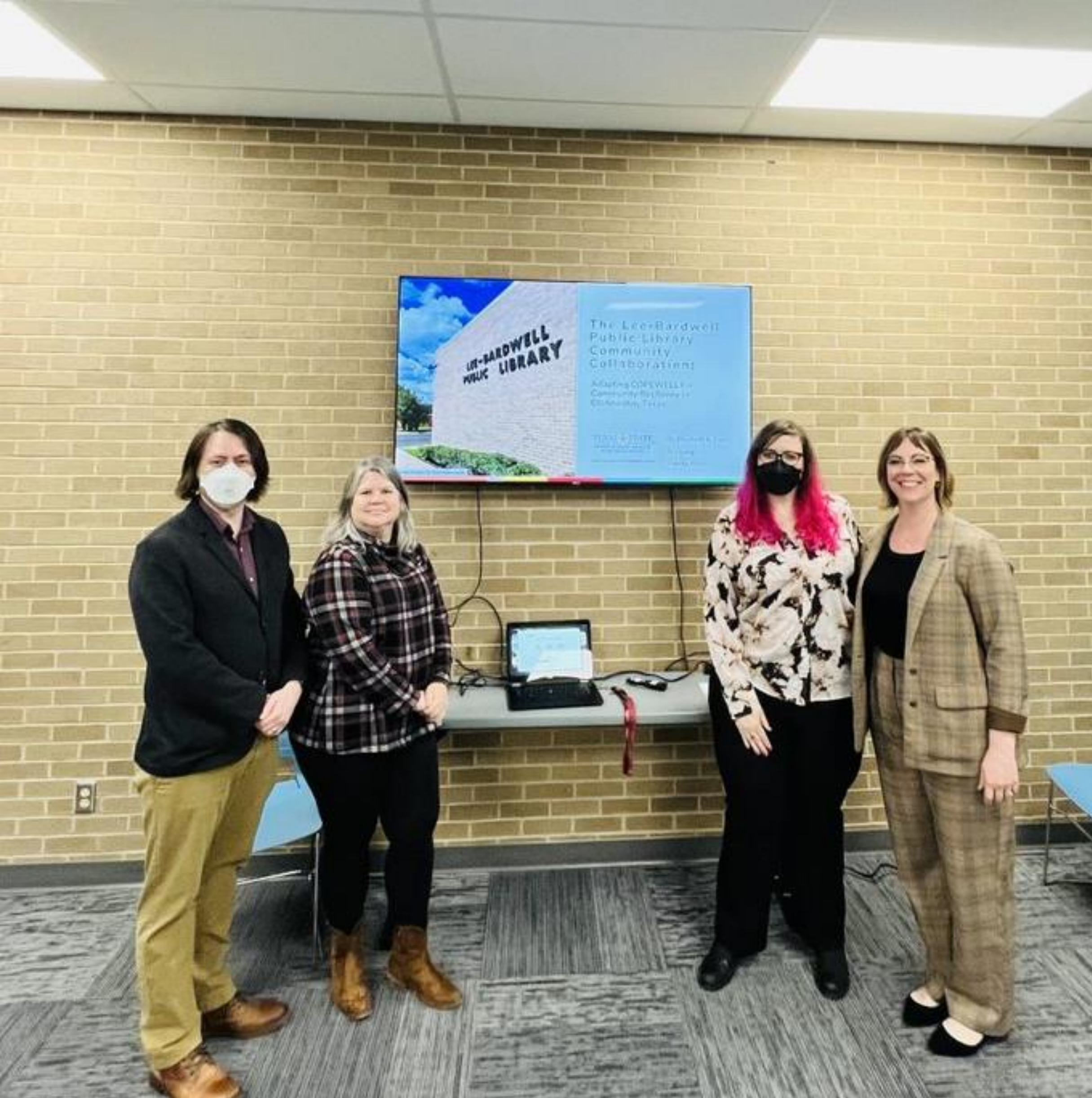


Introducing Student Co-Researchers

- Rex Long, THRC Doctoral Research Assistant
- COMM 5303 Students: Department of Communication Studies
- THRC M.A. Student Research Assistants
 - Britney Treviño
 - Anca Tonciu
 - Allister McNally
 - Rowan Lampert
 - Johnny Vasallo



Gladewater, Texas



- The Lee-Bardwell Public Library in Gladewater had **seven participants** including the Library Director.
- Over 6,400 residents
- *"What made Snowmageddon so bad was: Nobody had a plan. The water treatment plant froze up. People couldn't drive anywhere. City officials couldn't get out of their driveways. [Residents] were without power, didn't have backup generators, didn't have water supplies, didn't have rations." - Ivan*



potttsboro
AREA LIBRARY

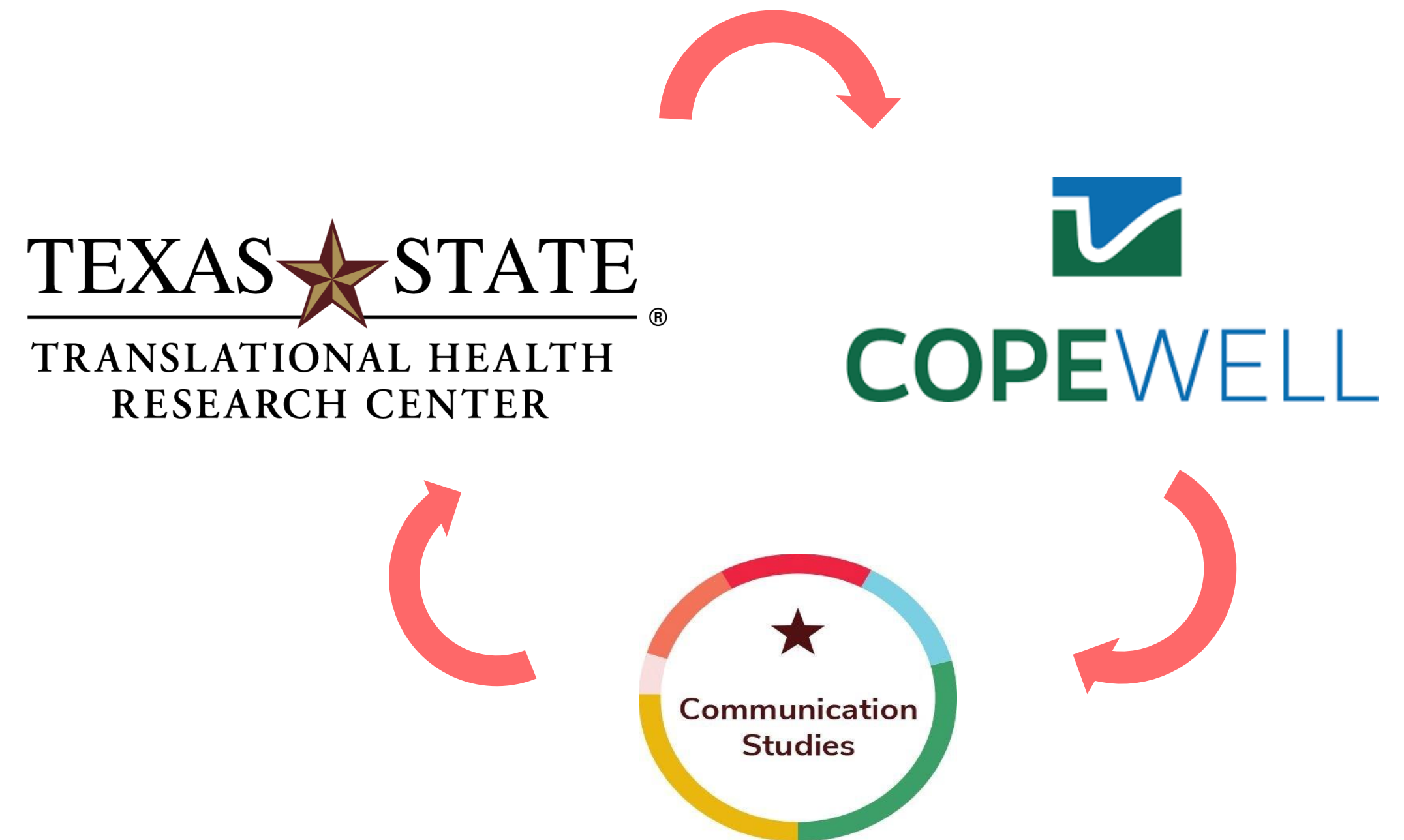


Potttsboro, Texas

- The Potttsboro Library in Potttsboro had **eight participants** including the Library Director.
- Census says 2,500 residents: Stakeholders say around 10,000 including peninsula.
- *"We get 100% of our water currently from a nearby city. When that Big Freeze happened, their system froze up. Which means our system froze up. Because we are 100% reliable on another city maintaining, being able to operate in [an] extreme weather emergency." - Claudette*

Adapting COPEWELL using Communication Studies and Collaboration

- Training Library Directors on **Communication Studies collaboration frameworks** and stakeholder selection.
- Beginning locally with **open, broader conversations** regarding community strengths and challenges.
- Facilitating **one COPEWELL rubric** and focusing on open brainstorming, diverse viewpoints, and initial actions items.
- **Shortening the time commitment** to participate.



Pilot Study Design: Our Process You Can Follow



STAKEHOLDER RECRUITMENT



FOCUS GROUP 1



PRE-SURVEY



FOCUS GROUP 2



EXIT INTERVIEW

Stakeholder Recruitment: Convening Community Collaborations via Requisite Diversity

- **Four levels of community**

collaboration (Heath & Frey, 2004)

1. Individual representatives
2. Collaborative group
3. Stakeholder organizations
4. Collaborating community

- **Requisite Diversity** focuses on inviting multiple voices, positions, and differences to be present "at the table" in collaboration (Heath & Isabell, 2017; Eger, 2017).

- **Library Directors convened collaborations** by:

- Identifying an initial list of 12 stakeholders and refining the list with the research team.
- Acting as a first contact with stakeholders to invite 6-8 final stakeholders to the collaboration.
- Joining focus groups as conveners and co-facilitators.
- Encouraging participation check-in throughout the process.
- Continuing the collaboration group after the pilot project.



Focus Group 1: Starting the Collaboration

- **Open, participatory discussions** describing the community's strengths and biggest challenges, while focusing on disaster events and the role of the library in their community.
- **Thematizing** resiliency and communication challenges in real-time as facilitators to prepare to introduce the COPEWELL framework.

REQUISITE DIVERSITY

- *"Honestly, the people that I'd spoke with, and that we talked about really do care about Gladewater...I think [that] helps...them interact with each other. And I say that having not seen them all interact together at one time ever."* - **Alma, Gladewater**
- *"I didn't feel at all like I had to worry about people being offended or stepping on anybody's toes...We were all there to provide input and really make a difference. There's always going to be a difference in opinions, especially politically...[from] different areas ...It seemed like everybody was able to open up and really listen."* - **Kyle, Pottsboro**

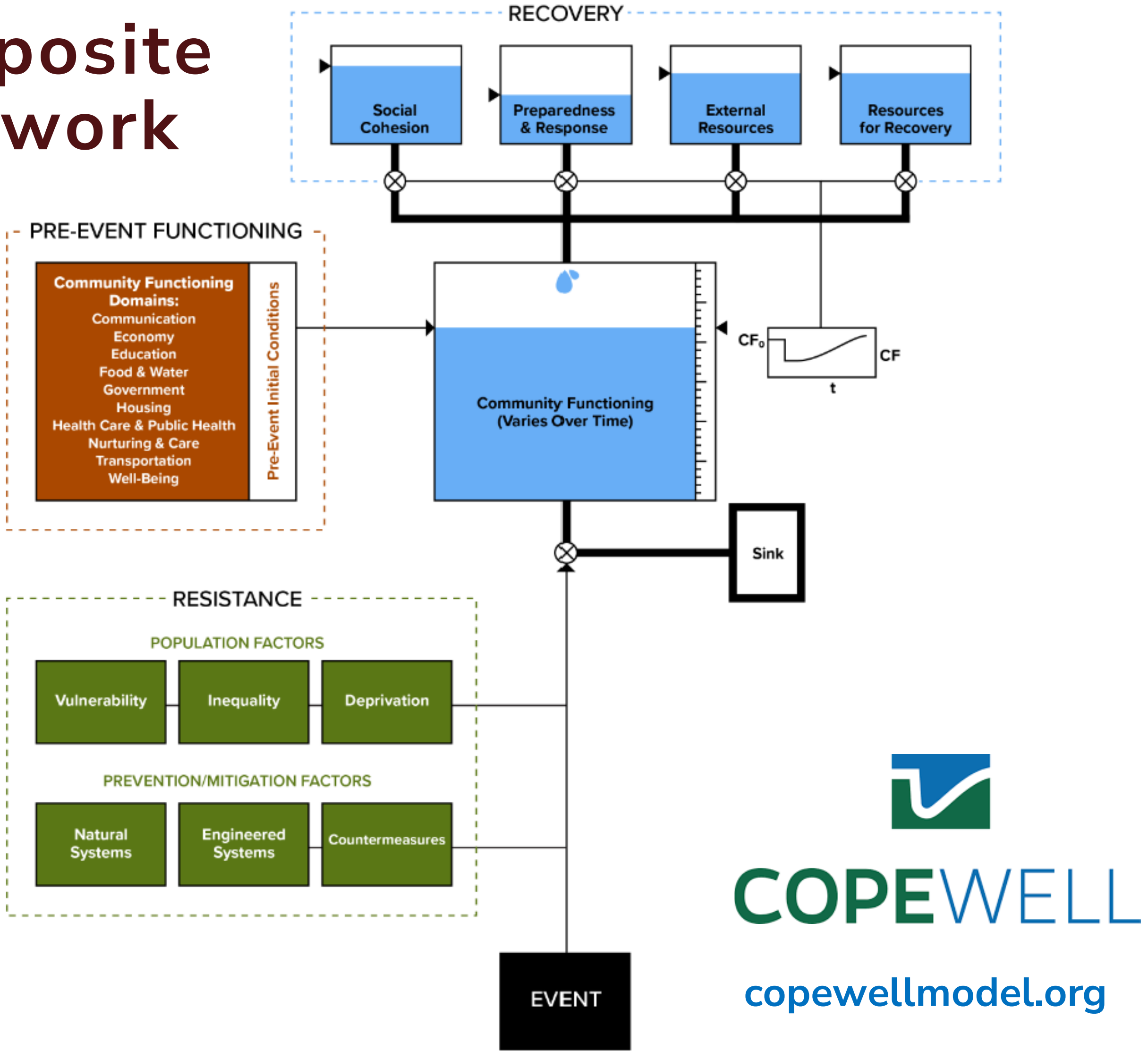


Introducing the COPWELL (Composite of Post-Event Wellbeing) Framework

COPEWELL includes a system dynamics computational model, resources for enacting change, and five self-assessment rubrics on Pre-Event Functioning, Resistance, and Recovery to disaster events:

1. Community Functioning
2. Prevention and Mitigation
3. Population Vulnerability, Inequality, and Deprivation
4. Social Capital and Cohesion
5. Emergency Management

The rubrics and implementation guides are meant to serve as a starting place, and COPEWELL welcomes adaptations, like our own focused on communication and collaboration.



Focus Group 1: COPEWELL Rubric Selection

COPEWELL self-assessment rubrics are intended to help communities assess challenges and strengths. Based on open discussion earlier in the first session, stakeholders at each site selected the rubric that most aligned with stated resiliency challenges:

Gladewater selected the **Emergency Management** rubric, which focuses on how "the entire community ...works to assess and reduce risks and vulnerabilities, and to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters" (COPEWELL, 2024).

Pottsboro selected the **Community Functioning** rubric, which assesses "The ability of a community to deliver goods and services to its residents" (COPEWELL, 2024).



HAZARD AND
VULNERABILITY
ANALYSIS AND
AWARENESS



WHOLE
COMMUNITY



READINESS
AND RESPONSE



RECOVERY
PLANNING AND
OPERATIONS



GOVERNANCE
AND ECONOMY



LIFE
NECESSITIES



HEALTH AND
WELLBEING



CRITICAL
INFRASTRUCTURE

Pre-Survey: Utilizing the COPEWELL Rubrics

COPEWELL SELF-ASSESSMENT

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT: Whole Community Involvement	
WHOLE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT INVOLVES	An emergency planning process that reflects the community's actual composition and that allocates a shared responsibility for disaster management across private, public, faith based, philanthropic, and non-profit sectors as well as with individual residents.
WHAT COMMUNITIES MIGHT LOOK LIKE WITH...	
LOW CAPACITY	Jurisdictional emergency management officials develop emergency operations plans with limited input from community stakeholders. Thus, the plans focus primarily on first responders and public safety providers, and do not meaningfully address access and functional needs of populations or pets. Local businesses see no reason to prepare their own disaster plans, or to review insurance coverage or take steps to protect critical data. Local human and social services organizations fail to consider how to maintain services in a disaster; support disaster-affected staff, and/or accommodate increased client demands due to disasters. Individuals and families assume disasters only happen to other people, and they have taken no measures to prepare their households for emergencies.
OPTIMAL CAPACITY	The jurisdiction's community emergency planning team reflects the makeup of the local population; taking ownership of whole-of-community planning, the team actively engages community leaders, the private sector, and those with access and functional needs. The planning addresses the issues of medically and socially vulnerable groups (e.g., children, elderly, limited English proficient populations) and pets. Firms of varying scale have conducted continuity of operations planning, invested in sufficient insurance (including business interruption), and shared contingency plans with clients, vendors, and employees. Non-profits have planned for crisis conditions, mindful of both client and employee needs. Households are characterized by having hazard insurance, stockpiled necessities, and family communication plans.

Item 1: Governance and Economy

This item involves a community's capacity to engage its residents fully and equitably in a thriving and diversified economy and in an efficient governance system that enables prudent policy-making, preserves the rule of law, and balances present and future needs.

LOW Capacity might look like:

Governance — Laws, rules and regulations are unfairly enforced and inadequate to deal with existing issues. Government communication is often unintelligible and inaccessible. Residents see the government as out of touch and the costs of public services as not worth the benefits they provide. Agencies make decisions arbitrarily, disregarding public opinion and stakeholder input. Government is not accountable; officials often run unopposed. The composition of the governmental workforce does not reflect community demographics.

Economy — Local unemployment is high, most jobs do not pay well, and the economy depends

owners. There is equal access to public goods, services and infrastructure. Good jobs, work opportunities, and incomes are expanding across the board. Individuals, households, communities and enterprises are secure enough to invest in their future. The economy is increasingly resilient to shocks and stresses, especially those that can hurt persons living in poverty the most. Prospects for economic and social wealth are increasing, evenly available, and sustained over generations.

Using the sliding scale below, please provide your ranking of this item from 1 (low capacity) to 10 (optimal capacity). **There are no wrong answers - we're interested in your honest opinion based on your existing knowledge/experiences.**



Using the text box below, please share your reasoning behind your score selection for **Governance and Economy.**



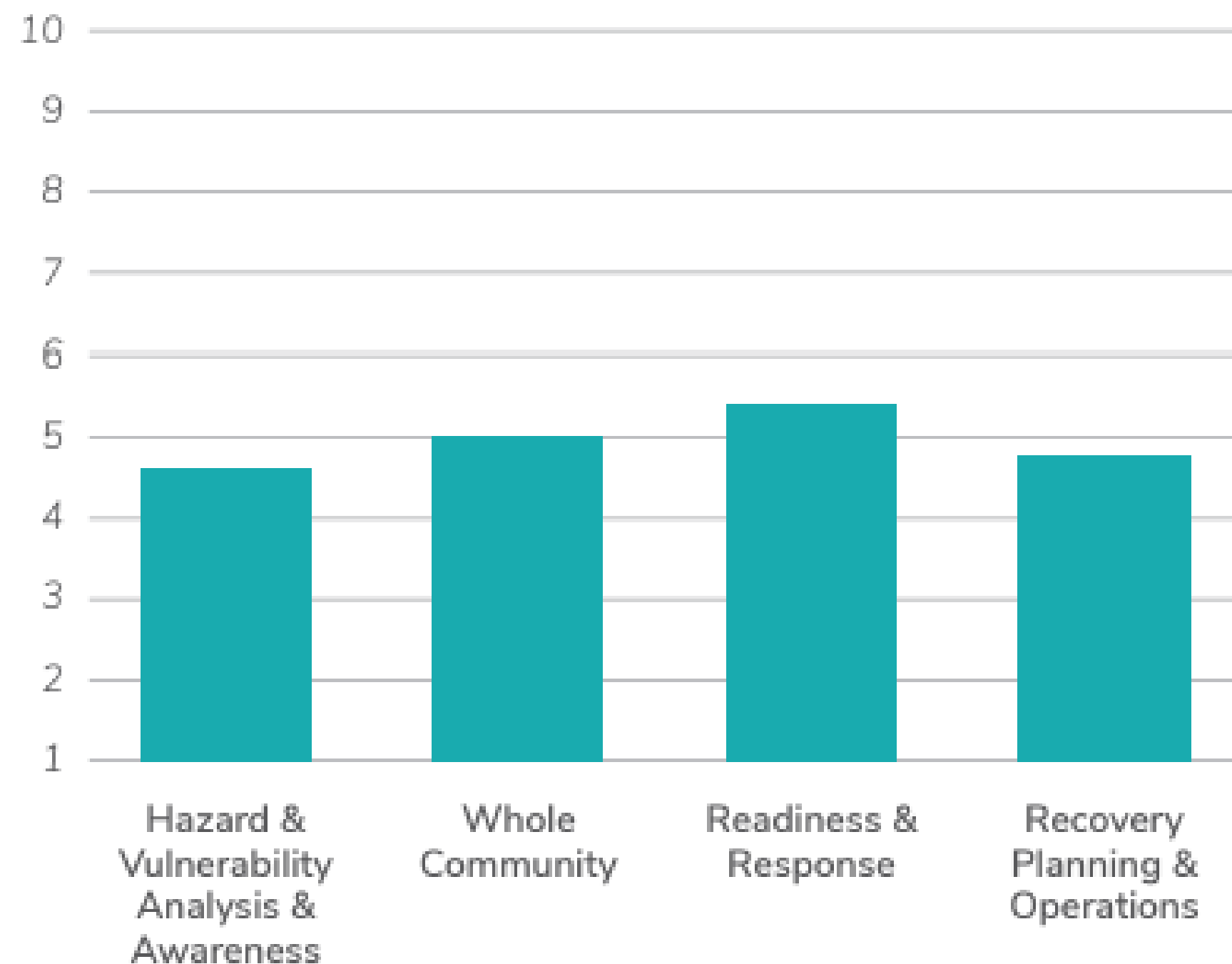
PRE-SURVEY

Focus Group 2: Extending the Conversation

Adapting the rubrics into an online survey allowed us to ask targeted questions in the second Focus Group.

Average Gladewater Domain Item Scores, Emergency Management

Source: Aggregated scores from pre-survey participants, 2023.



Discussing the Pre-Survey and Resiliency Challenges

- From the themes identified in your pre-survey responses, which theme is the **priority starting point** for your community?

Brainstorming and Initial Action Steps

- Based on responses, [theme 1] is the priority starting point. Where do we go from here?
 - Tell me more about how [next step(s)] could be implemented to address [theme 1].
 - How feasible do you think it would be to carry out [next step(s)]?
 - What would you need to successfully implement [next step(s)]?



PRE-SURVEY



FOCUS GROUP 2

Identifying Key Challenges and Initial Action Steps

Gladewater

Main Challenge

- **Communication for emergency management planning** across all areas of the COPEWELL rubric.

Related Action Item

- **Diversify modes of communication** between the office of emergency management and local partners.

Pottsboro

Main Challenge

- **Emotional connection to community and hesitation to critique** mixed with **past stalled resiliency planning.**

Related Action Item

- **Improve communication** between local government and Pottsboro residents.



Fostering the Spirit of Community Resiliency

"So, it was hard for me to see what we were missing, what we didn't have. ... These were things that I would expect to be done, and they just hadn't been for ten, 15, 20 years. ... scoring all of those things and realizing how much work needed to be done, I mean, I'm just ready to roll up my sleeves, I'm ready to get in." - **Alma, Gladewater**

"This was the first time in a very long time, I felt like I was at a meeting that wasn't wasting my time. And that we were actually productive...It's rare when you have this focused, kind of concise, wanting to move forward together." - **Charley, Pottsboro**



Gladewater Library Director's Project Experience: Brandy Winn

- The pilot project provided a **personal opportunity to better connect** with the Gladewater community.
- Convening stakeholders involved **considering more voices than the typical city leaders**, creating a stronger connection between the city and the community.
- Positioning the library to **meet diverse community needs**.
- How a community collaboration with COPEWELL can impact your **city emergency planning**.



Photo Credit: D. Christian Allen

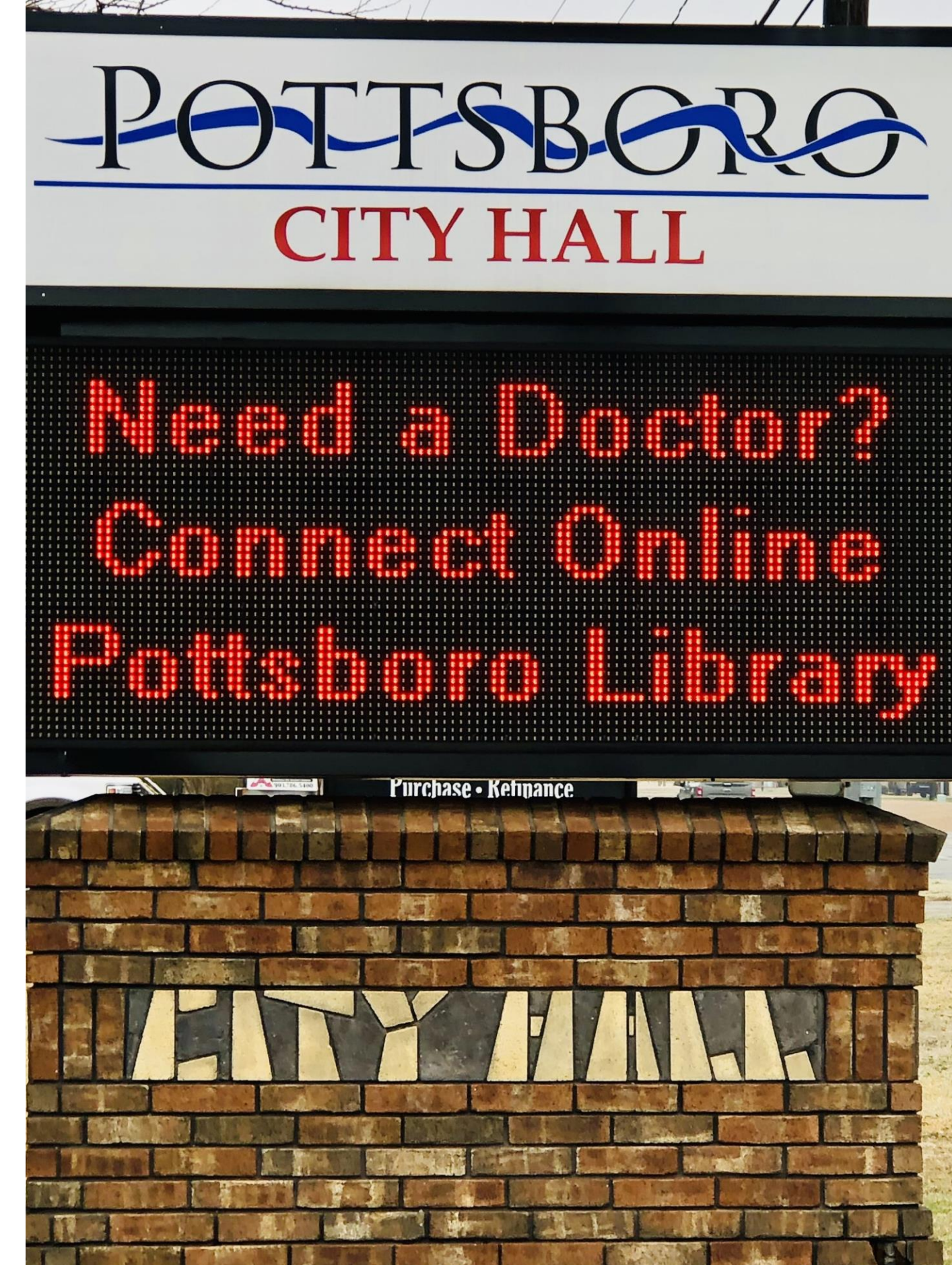
Gladewater Project Impacts and Continued Collaborations

- **ESL Resources** to make the library and reading more accessible to students and other Gladewater residents.
- **FEMA Training** to make the library an official emergency response partner.
- **Expanding Library Space** as part of five-year plan.
- **Established Disaster Corner** in library to provide relevant preparedness and safety information.
- **Reconvening Pilot Project Stakeholders** to continue resiliency planning quarterly or more.



Pottsboro Library Director's Project Experience: Dianne Connery

- Librarians are **ideal community conveners**.
- We used **requisite diversity** to help select stakeholders outside of the “usual suspects” for the collaboration.
- Addressing resiliency is **more than disasters**: It is a focus on childcare, eldercare, transportation, mental health support, food security, and more.
- How a community collaboration with COPEWELL can **impact your library and area**.



Pottsboro Project Impacts and Continued Collaborations

Connecting with stakeholders from different backgrounds is the foundation of collaboration.

- **Partnering** with one another's stakeholder organizations.
- **Second library location** to act as community center for future planning.
- **Grant writing** with project stakeholders for broadband access, new 911 technology, and using COPEWELL for future grant funding for the library.
- **Convening** future collaborations led by Dianne.





Photo Credits: Terry Bertling

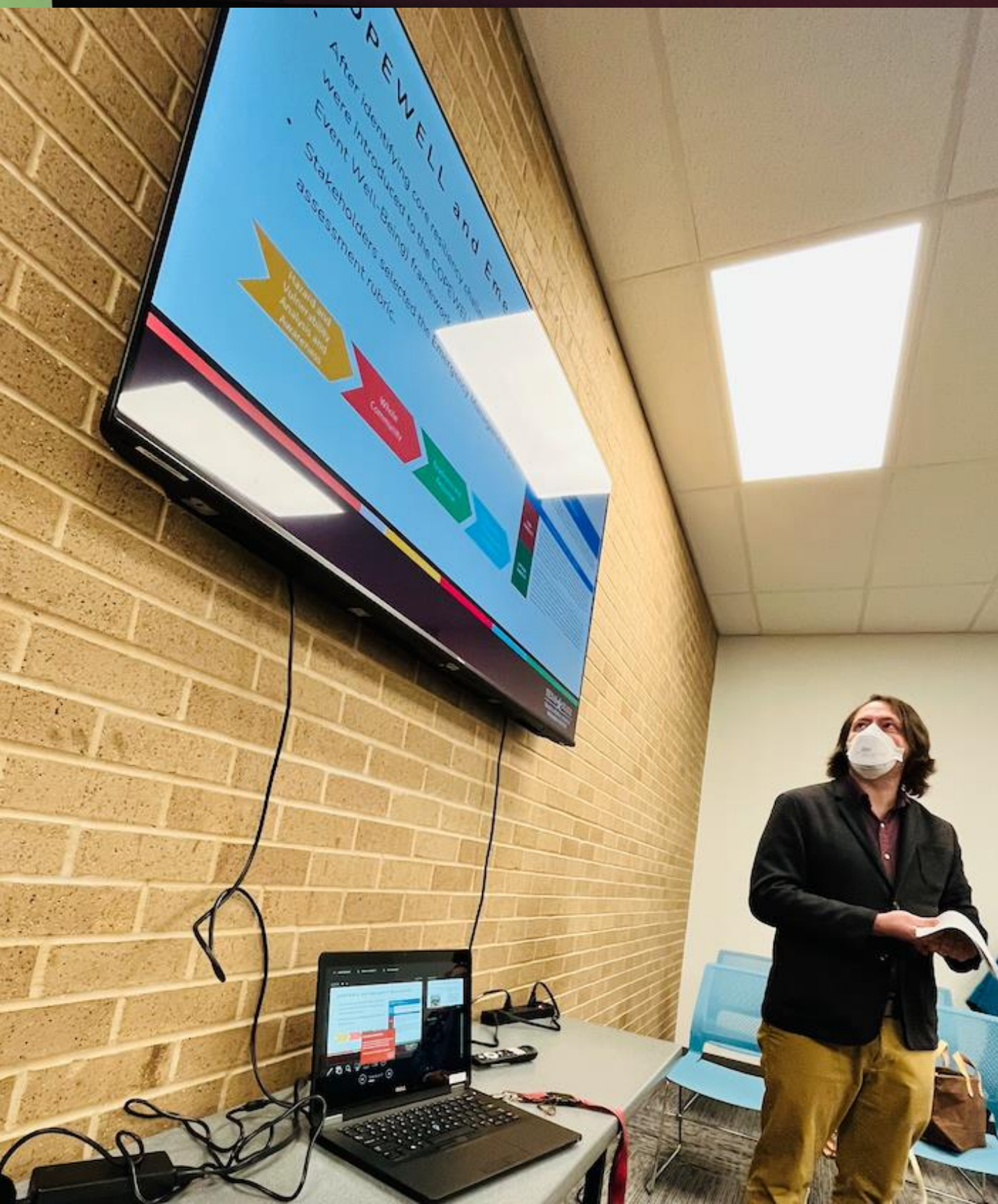
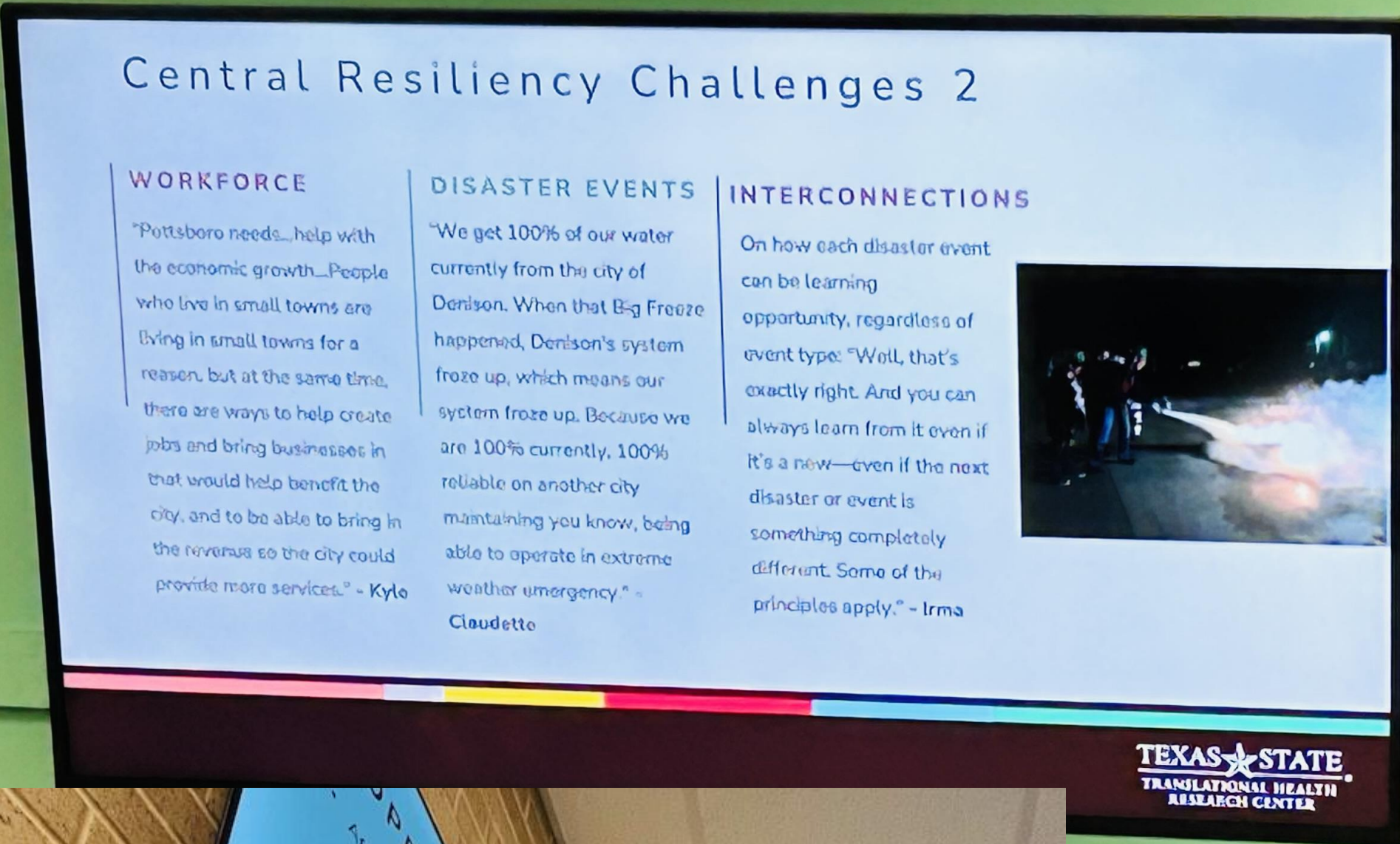


Tips for Convening Your Own Community Resiliency Collaboration

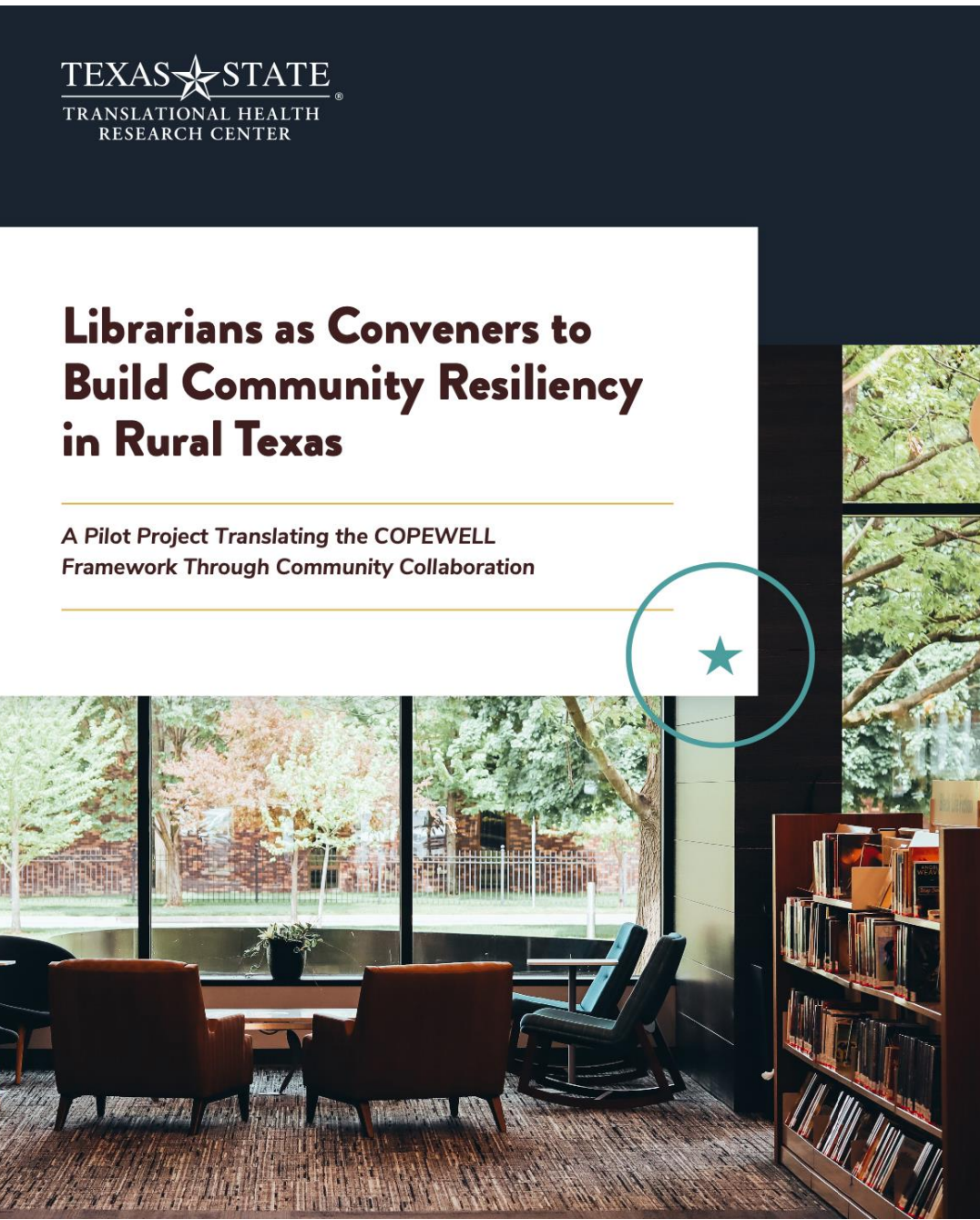
- Dedicate time and energy to scheduling processes.
- Aim for a manageable participant group (6-8 stakeholders).
- Establish confidentiality and data use plans before beginning.
- Consider hosting three (or more) focus group sessions to allow for more fruitful conversations.
- Be cautious of jumping to quick solutions.
- Recruit a diverse cross-section of the community.

Collaboration Tips Continued

- Embrace diverse meeting formats (e.g., in person and via Zoom).
- Engage all participants' voices as facilitators.
- Encourage and cultivate connections and networking potentials.
- Participate in the process with honesty and willingness to listen.
- Accept that disagreement can be generative.
- Welcome critiques of COPEWELL and the community collaboration process.
- Reach out to THRC and Dr. Eger for help!

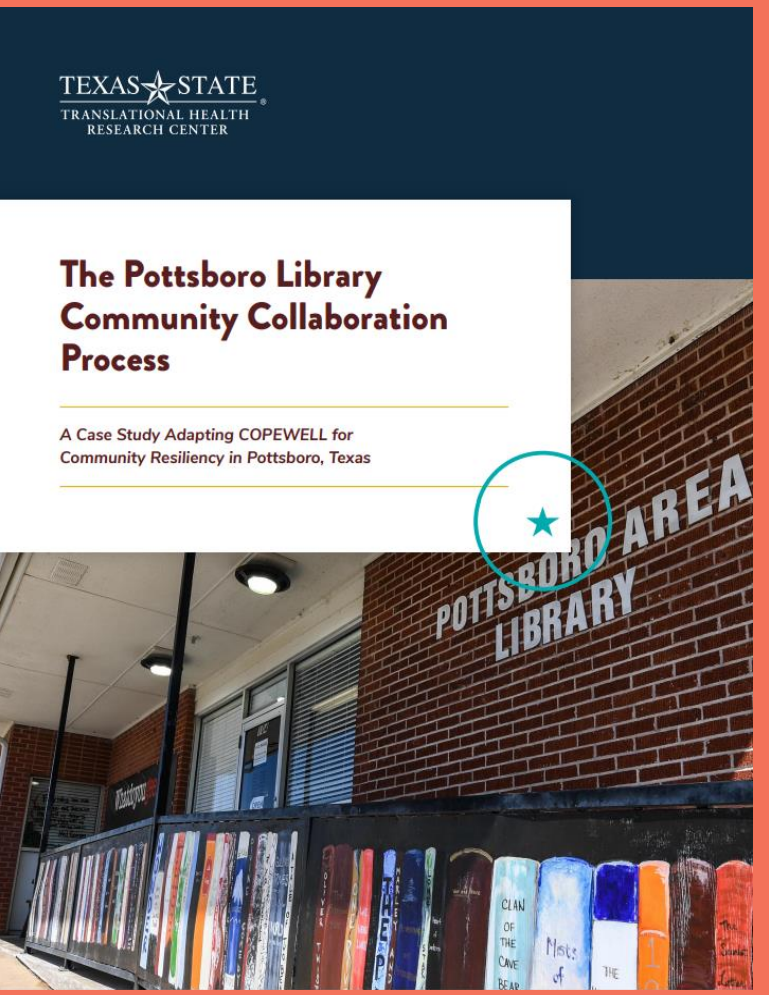


COPEWELL Adaptation Process Report



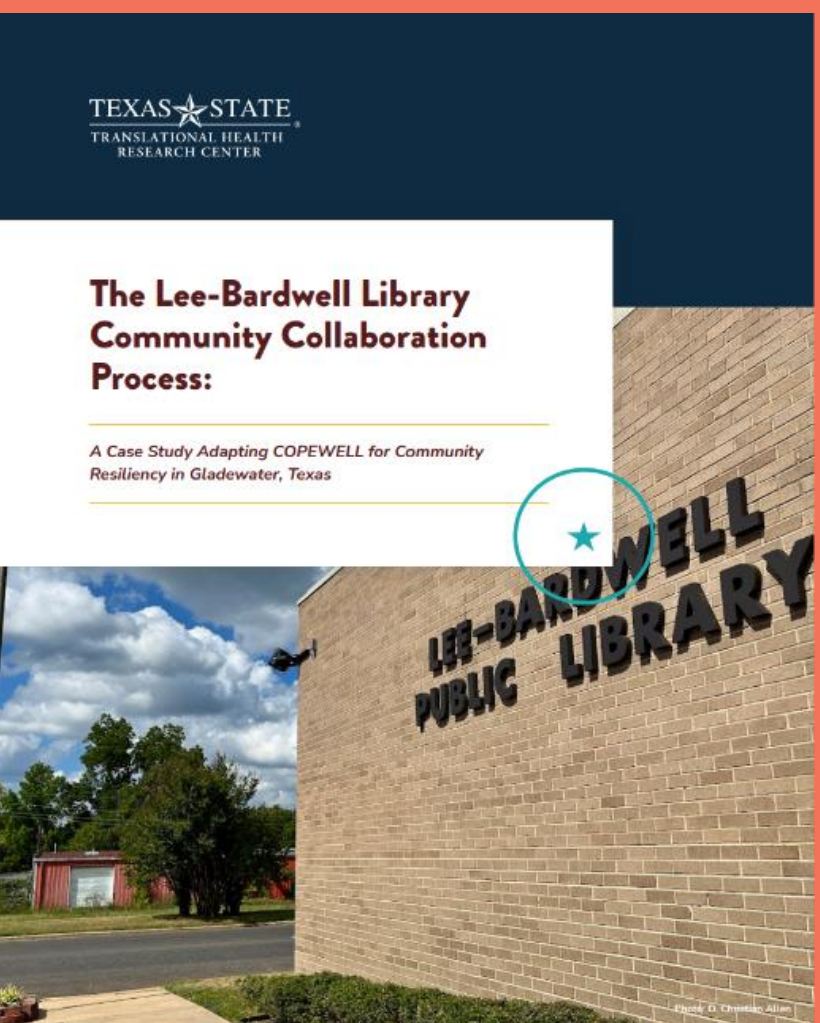
Visit: <https://bit.ly/TXResiliency>

Potttsboro Case Study



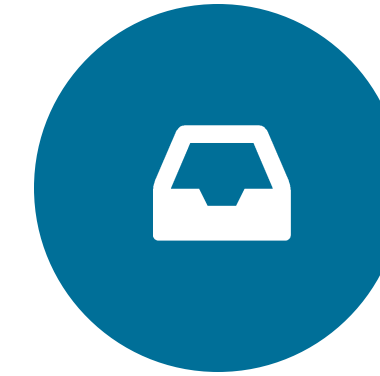
Visit: <https://bit.ly/Potttsboro>

Gladewater Case Study



Visit: <https://bit.ly/Gladewater>

Want to try a community resiliency collaboration in your area? Let's connect!



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