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## ODU, Elizabeth River Project Announce Collaborative Initiative

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# ODU, Elizabeth River Project Announce Collaborative Initiative

June 17, 2020



**By Joe Garvey**

Old Dominion University has announced a plan to work with the ODU Research Foundation to locate the University's Institute for Coastal Adaptation and Resilience (ODU ICAR) directly across Colley Avenue from the Elizabeth River Project's Resilience Lab for collaboration opportunities, in effect creating what President John R. Broderick calls a "resilience eco-corridor."

The ODU Research Foundation owns a building at 46th Street and Colley Avenue that would house ODU ICAR. Having complementary missions, their proximity to each other will allow the facilities to take advantage of collaboration opportunities:

- Operating in a state-of-the-art waterfront facility, the Elizabeth River Project will focus on demonstrating practical resilience approaches for the public and will showcase emerging efforts of multiple universities and partners in a Learning Park to be open to the public.
- The Old Dominion institute will be housed in an existing, non-waterfront facility as institute faculty, staff and students seek to engage the entire University campus in addressing resilience and

adaptation across disciplines. Access to the Elizabeth River Project's facility will provide opportunities for joint workshops and for students and interns to observe, demonstrate and apply research in a real-life setting.

"The co-location of Old Dominion University ICAR and Elizabeth River Project's Resilience Lab creates an exciting resilience eco-corridor on North Colley that will both build resilience, inform our community and share strategies that work in Hampton Roads with the world," Broderick said. "Faculty and students from across the University are eager to work with the Elizabeth River Project to incorporate research demonstration and hands-on learning."

ODU's announcement came in conjunction with the Elizabeth River Project's unveiling of plans for the Resilience Lab, the first facility on the East Coast intentionally to be constructed in the urban flood plain as a resilience model.

The lab will be a three-story, elevated, super-green facility and waterfront park constructed along one of Norfolk's busiest commercial corridors. The purpose will be to make emerging, practical solutions available to businesses, citizens and students for how to continue to live and work on the waterfront despite one of the most accelerated rates of sea level rise in the world. The unique focus will be on safeguarding not only humans, but the ecosystem.

"The river is at much at risk from sea level rise as you and me," says Marjorie Mayfield Jackson, executive director of the Elizabeth River Project. "Researchers now say there can be as much runoff pollution washing into the river with a high tide in one day as we used to expect over an entire year."

The Resilience Lab is just one element of the Elizabeth River Project's new \$9 million Next Wave Campaign. The Elizabeth River Project has raised 70% of the campaign goal but is counting on the community to donate the remaining funds needed. Final design of the Resilience Lab is underway by Work Program Architects of Norfolk, a regional leader in sustainable design. A design firm is being selected now for the expansion of the park facility. Thanks to a generous early donor, the park facility will be constructed first, as early as next year. Depending on fundraising success, the Resilience Lab will follow soon after.