After decades of focusing on climate mitigation, many cities are now taking steps to reduce their vulnerability to the impacts of climate change. Unlike mitigation, however, a purely local approach is not only limited in its effectiveness, due to diverse constraints on municipalities, but can also deepen the gap between the resilient “haves” and vulnerable “have nots”. My research studies five of the twelve metropolitan regions in the United States that have developed regional collaboratives for climate adaptation. I ask why regions adopted their particular organizational structures, the effect these different arrangements have on the adaptation planning strategies they develop, and the extent to which these efforts overcome the barriers to municipal adaptation. In this presentation, I discuss the roles and relationships of ecological, governance, and leadership contexts in shaping adaptation planning, and the implications of these findings for equitable and effective regional adaptation governance in the future.