



# Resilience: A Human-Centered Approach

Meredith Floyd-Preston, University of Oregon  
M.S. Strategic Communication, Capstone Project  
June, 2023

Copyright ©2023 by Meredith Floyd-Preston. All rights reserved.  
This project may be shared with other students.



# Introduction

The increasing impacts of climate change have many people asking big questions about how human beings can be more prepared for the dramatic results of wildfires, flooding, and extreme weather events. Urban planners are in a unique position to support communities by creating infrastructure and systems to support their preparation.

The planners at SERA Architects have begun a project to create a repeatable, customizable, human-centered approach to a design for “resilience hubs.” These community locations provide residents with resources and connections to support resilience. This project supports SERA’s resilience planners with a communications plan with the goal of increasing awareness of SERA Architects as a leader in the growing field of resilience hub design.

In the following pages, we’ll explore the concept of resilience hubs, followed by situational analyses of SERA Architects, climate change communication, and the town of Greenville, CA, where SERA planners have developed a relationship with residents who seek to rebuild after the devastation of the 2021 Dixie Fire.

This research and background information is followed by a communications plan proposal, including audience research, campaign goals and objectives, themes and strategies, and tactics designed to support SERA gain resilience hub project work.



# Contents

01

## The Background

Introduction	<a href="#">1</a>
Internal Environment	<a href="#">6</a>
Public Perception	<a href="#">12</a>
External Environment	<a href="#">13</a>
SWOT Summary	<a href="#">16</a>
What is a Resilience Hub?	<a href="#">18</a>
Pilot Community: Greenville, CA	<a href="#">20</a>

02

## The Research

Communicating Climate Change	<a href="#">23</a>
Target Audience Research	<a href="#">30</a>
Potential Employees	<a href="#">30</a>
Potential Clients	<a href="#">31</a>
Peers and the General Public	33

03

## The Plan

Executive Summary and Value	<a href="#">38</a>
Goals & Objectives	<a href="#">40</a>
Key Results	<a href="#">41</a>
Themes	<a href="#">42</a>
Audiences	<a href="#">43</a>
Strategies	<a href="#">44</a>

04

## The Tactics

Blog Posts	<a href="#">47</a>
Web Page	<a href="#">50</a>
Community Engagement Guide	<a href="#">53</a>
Conference Presentations	<a href="#">56</a>
Proposal One-Sheet	<a href="#">59</a>
Pitch Deck	<a href="#">62</a>
Budget	<a href="#">65</a>
Evaluation	<a href="#">68</a>

## [References & Appendix](#)

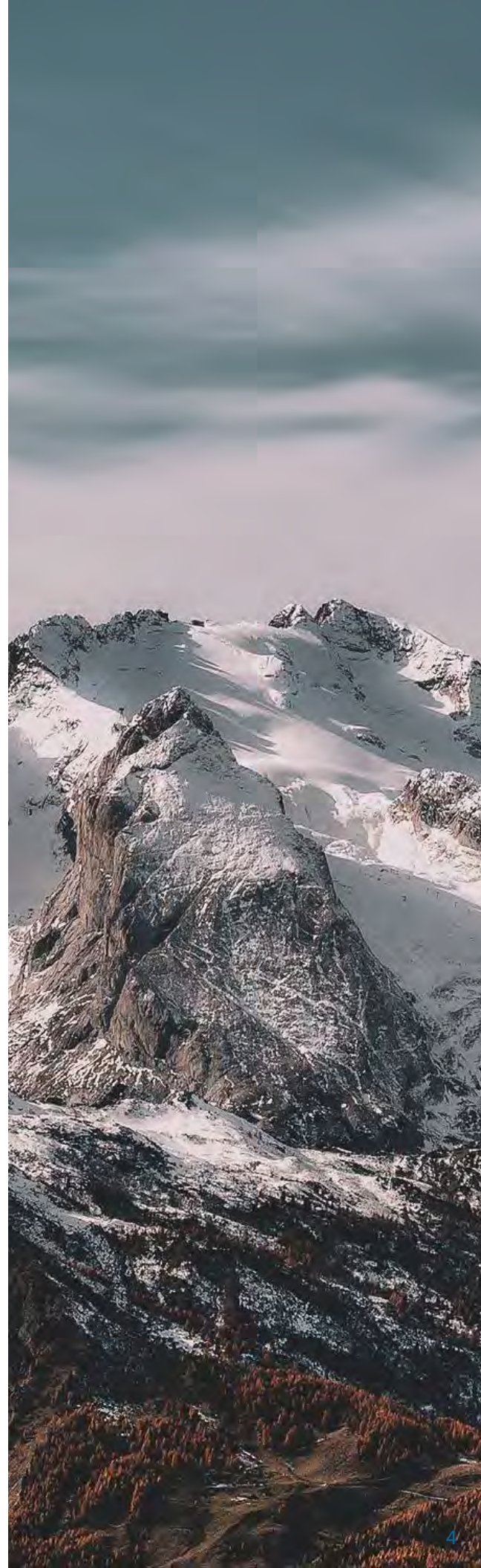
01

# The Background

Organizational Analysis of SERA Architects

Resilience Hubs

Pilot Community: Greenville, CA





“At SERA, we believe that a fully sustainable workplace is the logical first step toward practicing sustainability in our projects.”



# Organizational Analysis of SERA Architects

## Internal Environment

SERA Architects is a mid-size, multi-disciplinary firm that offers architecture, interiors, and urban design and planning services in Oregon, Washington, California, Idaho, and Montana. The firm holds sustainability at the heart of its practice, which underlies decision-making and practices within the firm.

**SERA**

We exist to make people's daily lives (unexpectedly) better.

surprisingly  
playfully  
tremendously  
boldly  
joyfully  
sustainably  
meaningfully  
delightfully  
adventurously  
cleverly  
powerfully  
measurably  
immeasurably  
bodaciously  
profoundly  
discernibly  
intentionally  
beautifully  
unabashedly  
vastly  
astoundingly  
obviously  
beautifully  
officially  
markedly  
gleefully  
naively

### *SERA's Purpose*

We exist to make people's everyday lives better.

### *SERA's Values*

We love gnarly problems.

We believe in cities.

Sustainability is our DNA.

We take responsibility for the past, present and future of place.

We serve our purpose by nurturing a design culture that is aligned around four core values:

**We love gnarly problems**

**We believe in cities**

**Sustainability is our DNA**

**We take responsibility for the past, present, and future of place**



# Organizational Analysis of SERA Architects

## 2023 Strategic Vision

SERA recently underwent a backcasting process in which firm leadership envisioned where the firm wants to be in 2035, and set intermediate goals for the intervening years. This exercise was part of a succession planning effort that leadership deemed necessary due to the number of core leadership members who are set to retire in the near future. This succession planning exercise yielded greater clarity about the future of the firm, its goals, and how to achieve them.

The goals of this work are four-fold:

- To reinforce our purpose
- To refine our values
- To define our vision
- To develop key strategies

The result was expressed in the form of three main pillars that are extensions of the existing purpose and values statements.

SERA 2035: We are a beneficial business that transforms places, lives, and our profession through rich diversity, smart collaboration, and evolved design. (Note: The reference to “beneficial” in this statement is a guiding intention for the visioning effort and does not refer to any specific certification program like Benefit Corporation or Certified B Corp.)

## RICH DIVERSITY

We are one SERA, walking the talk as a diverse group of thinkers and doers, leading change toward a just and equitable world.

To support the organization’s work towards diversity, in 2019, SERA began measuring business practices through Just, an emerging social-justice transparency program put forth by the International Living Future Institute. This platform requires the firm to disclose operations, how employees are treated, and where financial and community investments are made.



# Organizational Analysis of SERA Architects

## SMART COLLABORATION

We are known as the multi-disciplinary design integrators and have culturally internalized (and externalized) smart collaboration as a way of working.

The strategic visioning process includes a robust plan for future action with a timeline and considerations for how firm stakeholders will participate.

## EVOLVED DESIGN

We have industry-leading expertise in resilience, circularity, and decarbonization and are among the few firms achieving emotional resonance and quantifiable performance.

This “evolved design” pillar is most relevant for the resilience hubs focus of this project. The strategies to accomplish this pillar goal include specific goals and strategies (which are confidential).



# Organizational Analysis of SERA Architects

## Implementation Philosophy

Roles & Responsibilities

### Top-Down Efforts



- Strategy & Milestone Leads (P1s & Senior Associates)
- Firm Growth / Succession
- Project Selection & Work Planning

### Ground-Up Efforts



- Day-to-day Work
- Existing Committees
- DIGITs & DIG Initiatives



**SERA**  
2035

# Organizational Analysis of SERA Architects

## Financial Structure

SERA is a 100% employee-owned firm, a structure that stands in stark contrast to the typical owner/buy-out model found in most architecture firms. According to this more traditional model, advancement and succession depend upon firm leaders' financial investment. In an effort to make advancement more equitable and merit-based, the original founders of the firm, Bing Sheldon and Don Eggleston, shifted the firm's structure so that upon their retirement, ownership would transfer to the employees through an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP).

An ESOP is an employee stock ownership trust whereby 100% of the privately-held stocks are kept in an employee benefit trust. Depending on performance numbers, the company contributes annually to the trust. Each year, the company is appraised, and a stock price per share is determined. The number of shares per employee is based largely on tenure and salary. The tenure, or vesting period, allocates a certain percentage of the firm's investment for each employee. Each year of employment, the vested percentage increases until, after six years, an employee is fully vested.

Firm leadership considers its ESOP structure one of its strongest differentiators, recognizing that when employees receive a piece of the pie, they are more likely to engage and put forth their strongest effort. According to Managing Principal Joe Pinzone, "Being employee-owned empowers our staff in decision-making, one of SERA's fundamental values that serves both the long-term health of the firm and our employee-owners."

Though, on the whole, the ESOP structure is a strength of the organization, it does present challenges. One of these difficulties is that when individuals leave the firm, their shares must be cashed out and bought back by the firm. SERA needs to keep sufficient financial reserves to provide this payout, particularly when fully vested, long-time employees leave the firm.

# Organizational Analysis of SERA Architects

## Urban Design + Planning Studio

As a multidisciplinary firm, SERA provides architecture, interiors, and urban design and planning services. The resilience hub effort that is the subject of this project is housed under the umbrella of the urban design and planning department (or studio) at SERA.

Much of this studio's work in recent years has been funded by a large technology client in Silicon Valley. SERA has worked in partnership with this client, local government agencies, and other architecture and planning firms to create an active mobility pedestrian and bicycle network that connects the client's campus to the larger community. Recently, the threat of a recession has caused the client to discontinue work on this and other previously planned projects. Though this turn of events impacts the studio's (and SERA's) bottom line, it has also freed up labor and provided planners with time to work on new initiatives. Two of the planners working on resilience hub design had previously been assigned to projects for the technology client.

The studio and this resilience hub project also benefit from an existing relationship with the City of Greenville. Greenville, a town in Plumas County, CA, with a population of about 1,000, was devastated by the 2021 Dixie Fire. Despite the fact that almost all of the buildings were destroyed, the citizens of the town, now dispersed to a variety of locations, plan to rebuild.

SERA has developed a relationship with a nonprofit called the Dixie Fire Collaborative that is guiding rebuilding efforts. Due in part to this relationship, the resilience hub project began with a focus on resilience hub design in rural locations.

## Infracenters

In recent years, SERA has launched a new organization called Infracenters. This separate company, founded by senior SERA leadership, focuses on sustainable community infrastructure. Through this organization, SERA has access to potential clients and resources involved with infrastructure. Developing resilience hubs alongside new infrastructure is an economical and efficient way to provide resilience services to communities. Resilience features are easy to incorporate and affordable compared to the cost of infrastructure, so the connection to these clients presents a clear opportunity.



# Organizational Analysis of SERA Architects

## Public Perception

The public perception of SERA is generally positive. The firm's greatest challenge is visibility. Clients give exceptional feedback, and the firm enjoys long-lasting relationships with many clients, but one of them recently referred to the firm as "the Portland architecture community's best-kept secret." Clearly, the firm does not benefit from being anyone's "best-kept secret." Other client feedback suggests that public perception positions SERA as a leader in sustainability in the built environment.

This project's primary research also points to the public perception of SERA. A survey of current architecture students suggests that the firm is known among emerging professionals in the industry as a leader in sustainable design, which is an area of importance for this audience.



More information about this will be presented in the research portion of this project. Though public perception information about SERA's work is difficult to collect, there are many resources that point to SERA's reputation as an employer. According to Glassdoor, the firm receives 4.1 out of 5 stars from employee reviews. Noted strengths are the firm's culture, transparency, and commitment to employee development and training. According to these reviews, and SERA's own assessment, lack of diversity is a noted challenge.

# External Analysis

## External Environment

### Climate Change

Climate change and the public's perception of its damaging impacts is one of the biggest external factors on SERA and the resilience hub project. According to the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication, the national average of adults who think global warming is happening is 72%. That average is higher in the locations where SERA practices, with 74% in Oregon, 75% in Washington, and 77% in California (Leiserowitz et al., 2023).

Nationally, people are generally worried about global warming (65%), believe it is affecting the weather (64%), and believe that it will harm future generations (71%) (Leiserowitz et al., 2023).

People are also willing to back these concerns up with policy. According to the program, 77% support funding research into renewable energy sources, 72% support regulating CO2 as a pollutant, and 77% support tax rebates for energy-efficient vehicles or solar panels (Leiserowitz et al., 2023).

Though much is often made about the polarized political situation regarding climate change, most of the country supports funding climate change relief efforts.

### Portland's COVID Recovery and Looming Recession

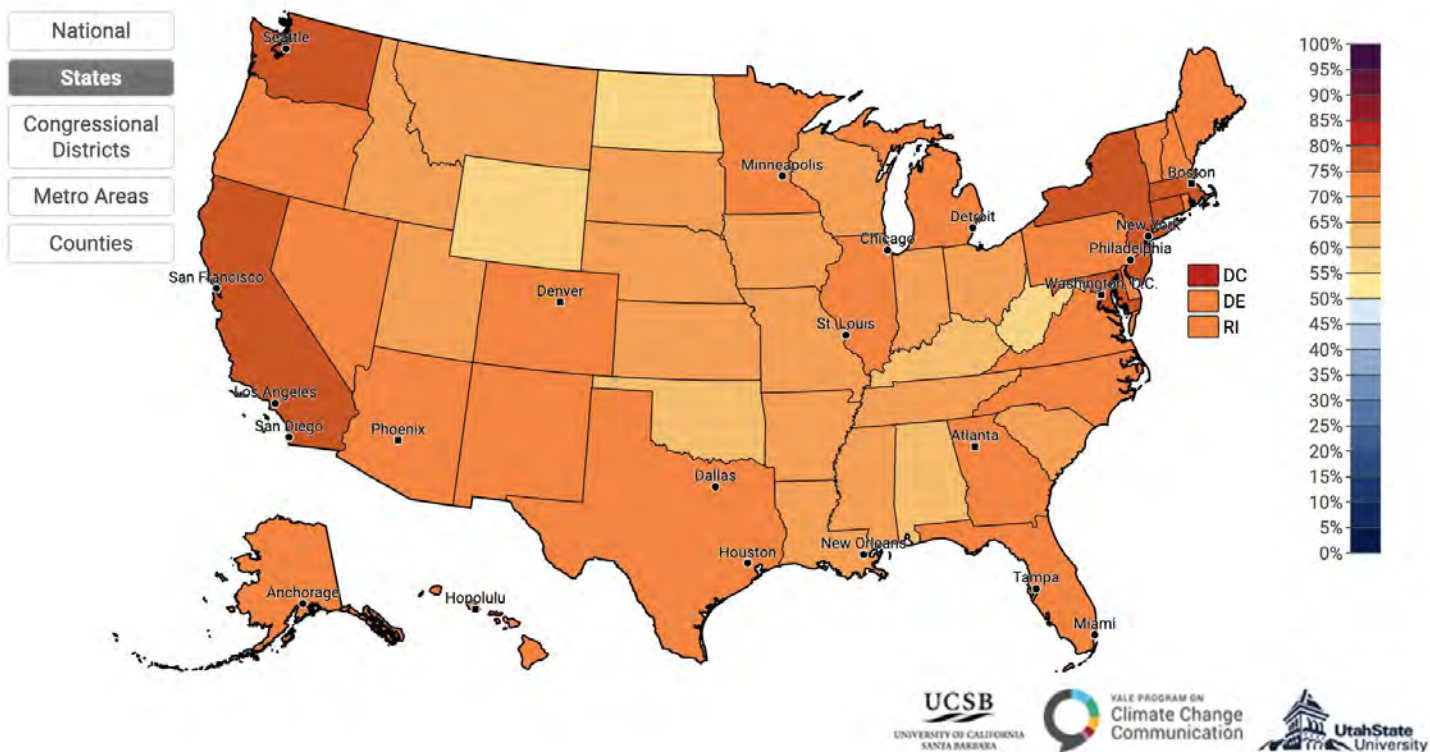
Like many businesses in Portland, SERA was strongly impacted by COVID and the civil unrest of 2020. During this time, the firm transitioned to fully remote work, and activity stopped on many projects. Since the pandemic has abated, the industry has been slowly returning to pre-COVID levels of productivity. In recent months, the looming recession has put the brakes on that recovery process. This slow-down has been particularly present among technology companies, which represent a large revenue base for SERA (Lowrey, 2023).

The events of 2020 coincided with SERA's decision to relocate the firm's Portland headquarters from its longtime Old Town location to the more central Galleria Building in downtown Portland, which included a significant investment in a tenant improvement project. Despite the heavy toll that the pandemic and civil unrest had on the downtown area, SERA committed to investment in the central business core.

# External Analysis

## A Controversial Topic

There is some good news when it comes to communication about climate change. Research from The Yale Program on Climate Change Communication suggests that what was once a controversial, political topic is becoming less so. The below map shows opinions on the question, “Is global warming happening?” Nationally, 72% believe it is happening and the numbers are even higher on the West Coast (where SERA Architects practices).



Not only do many people believe that global warming is happening, but they're also willing to back up their concerns with policy. 77% believe that we should fund research into renewable energy, 72% believe we should regulate CO2 as a pollutant, and 77% believe we should provide tax rebates for energy efficient vehicles or solar panels.



# External Analysis

## The Hybrid Work Environment

As organizations return to in-person work, many are responding to their employees' desire not to return to pre-pandemic working models. Employees appreciate the flexibility of the hybrid work environment, and so many employers are reducing investment in on-site workplaces. For a firm like SERA, which has a robust workplace design team, this reluctance to invest in workspaces represents a threat.

## Competitors

Competition for architecture projects is tight, and there are a number of firms that vie with SERA for project work. Some of those firms include Mithun, ZGF Architects, and BORA Architects. All of these firms have achieved some recognition for sustainable architecture design. Many of these firms also provide resilience planning services.

One challenge that could interfere with SERA's visibility as a sustainability leader is that the firm does not offer sustainability consulting services separate from its project work. SERA's primary competitors also do not offer those services separately, and transitioning to a model that includes a separate sustainability consulting department would require an investment that the firm has decided not to make at this time.

## Funding Opportunities

Recent legislation, particularly the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022, has increased government funding for resilience projects. Though funding is available, accessing those funds can be a tedious, time-consuming, and time-sensitive process that not all potential clients will be able or willing to engage with.



# SWOT Summary

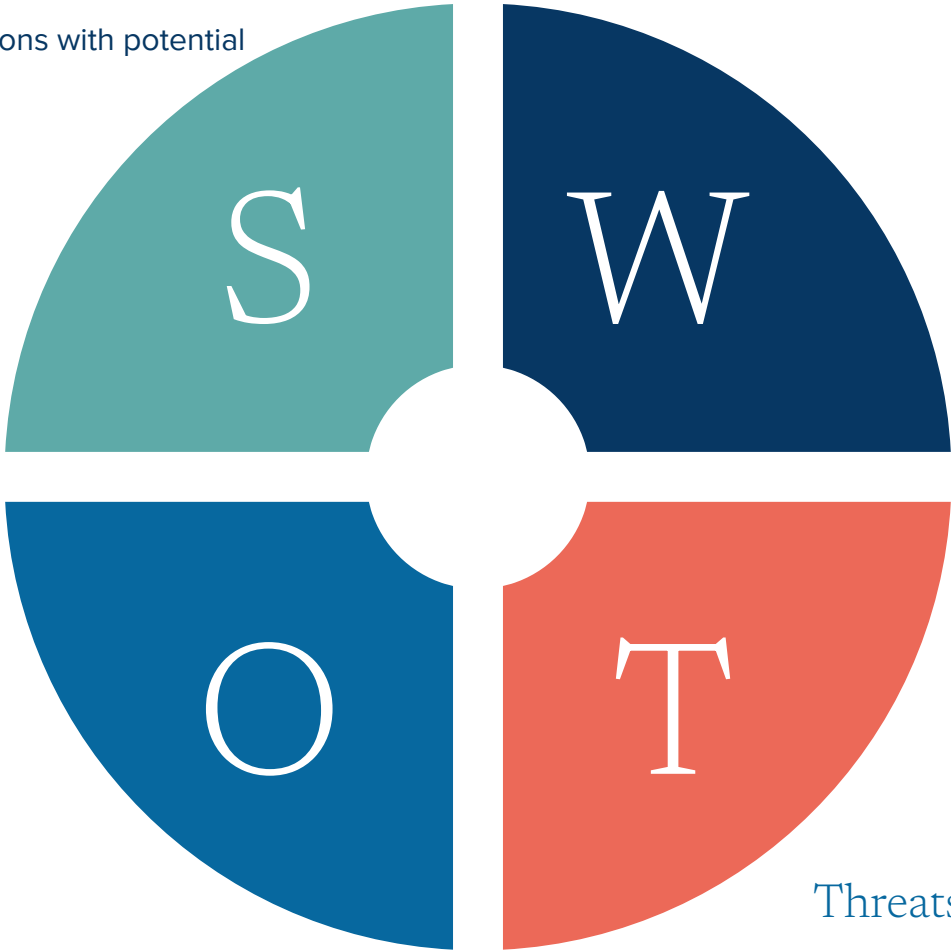
The previous analysis examines the firm’s position more broadly. The SWOT assessment below focuses more specifically on the situational analysis of the resilience hub project.

## Strengths

- Clear strategic vision, with resilience as a key area of focus
- Trained and available workforce
- Financial structure that supports initiative and succession
- Established connections with potential clients

## Weaknesses

- Increased need to dedicate workforce hours to business development
- Unsustainability of workplace department, potential need to retrain labor to work in other sectors
- Visibility issues



## Opportunities

- Growing public concern regarding climate change
- SERA’s reputation for sustainability
- Existence of many communities in need of climate event recovery services
- Increased funding from the passage of the Inflation Recovery Act

## Threats

- Ongoing pandemic recovery
- Increasing recession potential
- Uncertain income stream due to changes with large tech client
- Competitor firms also pursuing this work
- Need to act quickly to access IRA funding
- Lack of understanding of how to access IRA funds

For SERA, a resilience hub is a heart and hub within the community, integral to community culture, that is designed to help weather the shocks and stresses unique to that place.





# What is a Resilience Hub?

A resilience hub is a community-serving facility that is designed to support area residents by coordinating communication, distributing resources, and reducing carbon pollution in response to climate change.

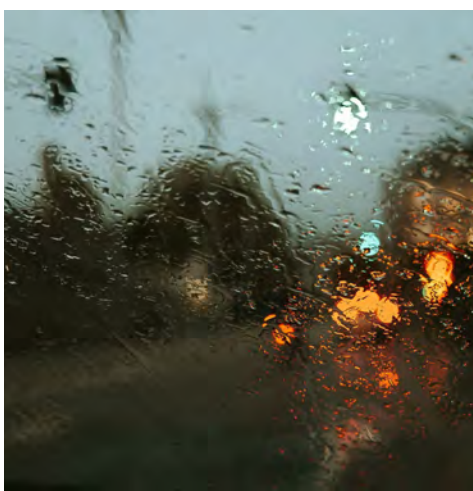
Resilience is a community's ability to "anticipate, accommodate, and positively adapt to or thrive amidst changing climate conditions and hazard events" (Baja, 2018).

There are three functioning modes of resilience hubs.



Everyday

In order to be most effective, a resilience hub cannot only function during times of disruption. During everyday life, the resilience hub provides a location to strategize and address the root causes of a community's vulnerability. While it does this, it can provide other community needs, including preparedness workshops, wellness activities, and community gathering areas.



Disruption

During a disrupting climate event, the resilience hub serves as a primary gathering place and a central point for assessing impacts, distributing information and resources, and guiding a response. Ideally, residents, businesses, and organizations are all involved in managing the hub.



Recovery

A resilience hub supports a recovering community's need for ongoing communications and resource sharing. With programming options like a tool center, remote work hub, and community kitchen, neighbors can work together to strengthen and rebuild their community.

# Resilience Hub Example

## Boyle Heights Conservatory

Los Angeles, CA

Boyle Heights Conservatory exists to introduce pathways to careers and workforce development in film, art, and digital media for our communities who have most historically denied these opportunities. The space is a heart in the community, so the perfect home for a resilience hub.



### EVERYDAY

Youth programming, assistance to the formerly incarcerated, job training, and community outreach in multiple languages

Equipped with solar, mobile battery units, and water capture/filtration system.

Makes use of an existing/familiar building.

### DISRUPTION

Community-based partnerships to support engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic

### RECOVERY

Training for proactive community recovery preparedness

*Credit: [www.resilience-hubs.org](http://www.resilience-hubs.org)*



# Resilience Hub Example

## SERA's Resilience Hub Design

Everyday Mode





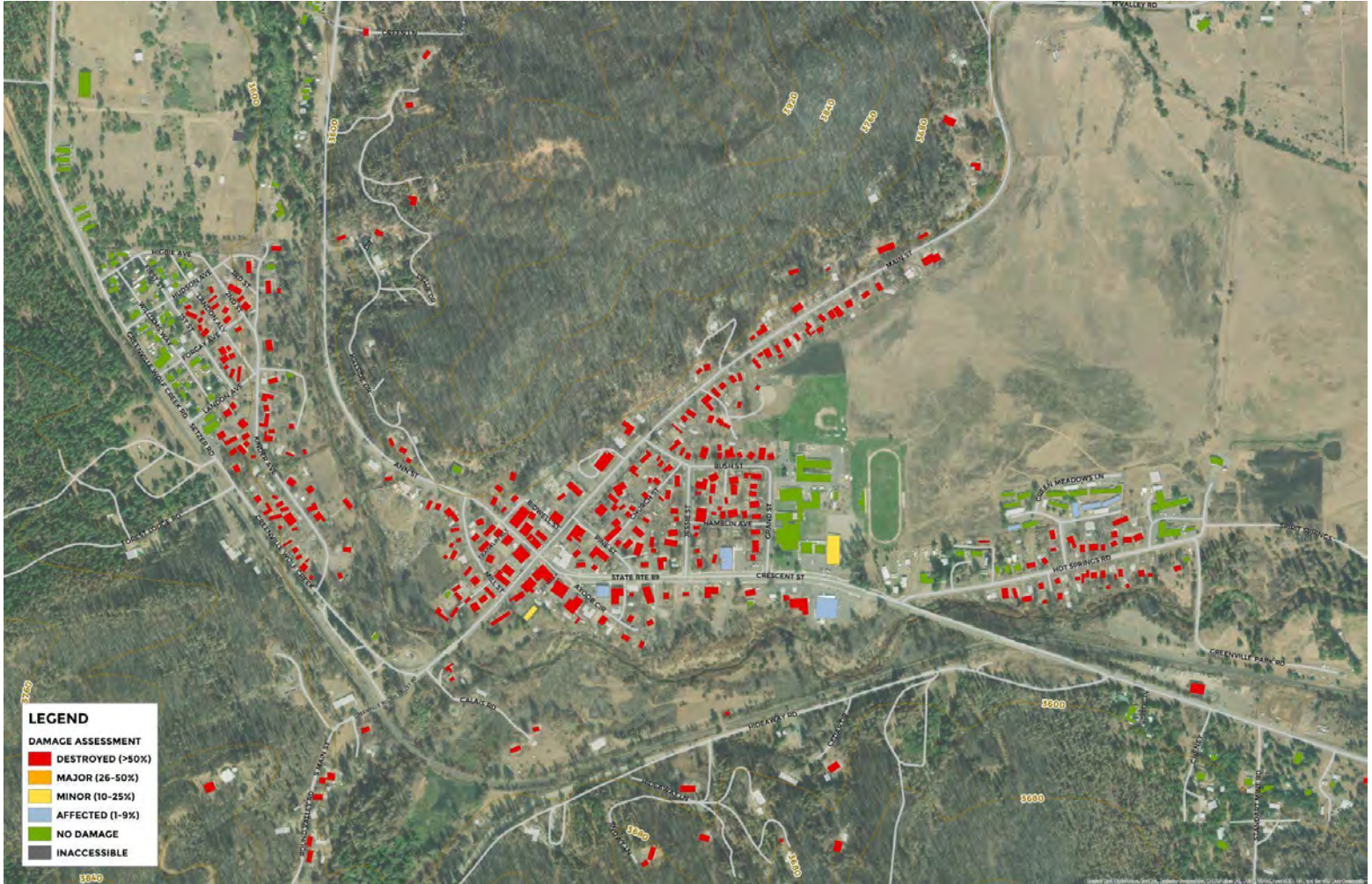
# Pilot Community: Greenville, CA



Greenville is, or was, a little town of 1000 people in Plumas County in the Sierra Nevada mountains. It had a quaint little downtown that attracted outdoor enthusiasts and work from home folks escaping the Bay Area rat race. But in 2021, the Dixie Fire hit Greenville and the entire town was decimated in a matter of minutes. We at SERA heard the story of the first responder fire fighters who were on the site and knew we had to get involved. They knew that the fire was coming, and fast, so they knew they wouldn't be able to save much. The entire town would be lost unless they came together and agreed on what they could save.



# Greenville, CA



This map tells the story of the heroic emergency responders who were forced to make united decisions in a matter of minutes without a guiding framework. In the center part of the image, the green buildings labeled “no damage” belong to the high school. The fire burned through the town within 15 minutes, and in that time, firefighters realized they could save one location. They decided upon the high school.

SERA’s planners were moved by this story and realized that their resilience hub work could help make those decisions easier for the firefighters and help the citizens of Greenville be more resilient in the future.

SERA’s urban design and planning resilience team has undertaken an effort to design a human-centered resilience hub model that can be implemented in a variety of communities. The team is using the community of Greenville, CA, as a test case for this work.

# 02

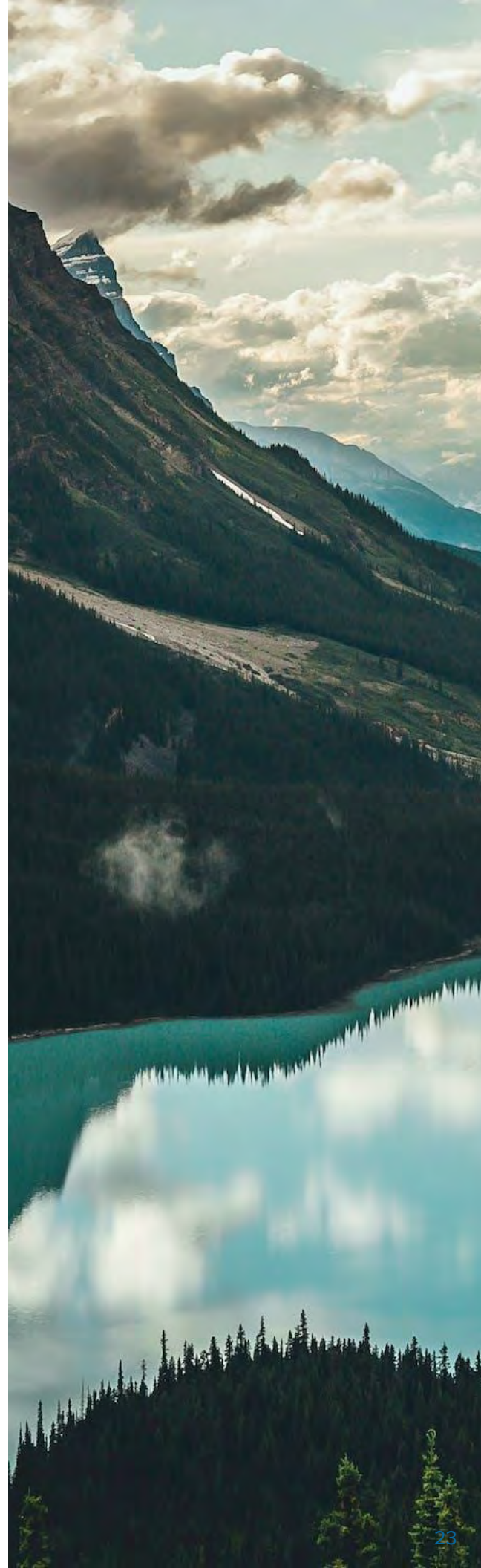
## The Research

Communicating Climate Change

Target Audience Research

- Potential Employees
- Potential Clients
- Peers and the General Public

Recommendations





# Communicating Climate Change

Climate change is at the heart of resilience. Though communities face a variety of risks and vulnerabilities, the resilience hubs that are the focus of this project are designed to make communities more resilient to the harmful effects of climate change. Understanding how to help people understand climate change and the impacts it has on their lives will support SERA's success in promoting its resilience hub work.

When it comes to communication challenges, climate change has many. It's a topic that is much debated and politically polarizing. Depending on which side of the political divide individuals fall on, audience members' reactions can vary from "What's the big deal?" to "That's terrifying, and there's nothing I can do about it." Neither of these responses inspires the action that climate action supporters wish to generate (Rettie et al., 2012). The details are complex, scientific, and difficult to comprehend. But if communicators attempt to make them more clear and urgent, they run the risk of scaring the audience away with emotional messages that force people to face their vulnerability. Additionally, for-profit businesses, and the marketing departments that support them, do not often represent the authority and trustworthiness that community members seek when facing threatening circumstances (Moser & Dilling, 2004).

At the same time, effective climate change communication has never been more important.

According to Jacquelyn A. Ottman (2017) in *The New Rules of Green Marketing: Strategies, Tools, and Inspiration for Sustainable Branding*, "The condition of the environment is expected to worsen in the years and decades ahead. . . By 2030, climate-change-induced calamities alone are projected to account for 500,000 deaths and \$340 billion in damages, up from 315,000 and \$125 billion today. . . It is projected that, by 2025, two-thirds of the world's people will not have access to potable water" (p. 18).

How can businesses that aim to support communities with resilience communicate their value?

## The Shifting Role of Business

According to John Grant, author of *Greener Marketing* (2020), there was a time when it was sufficient for businesses to be "Not Bad" with regards to sustainable action. As long as a business was committed to minimizing negative impacts, it earned a positive environmental reputation. But now "Not Bad" is the baseline and doesn't earn a business sustainability credit. "Net Good," a situation where the world is a better place because of the business's existence, is the new environmental standard.

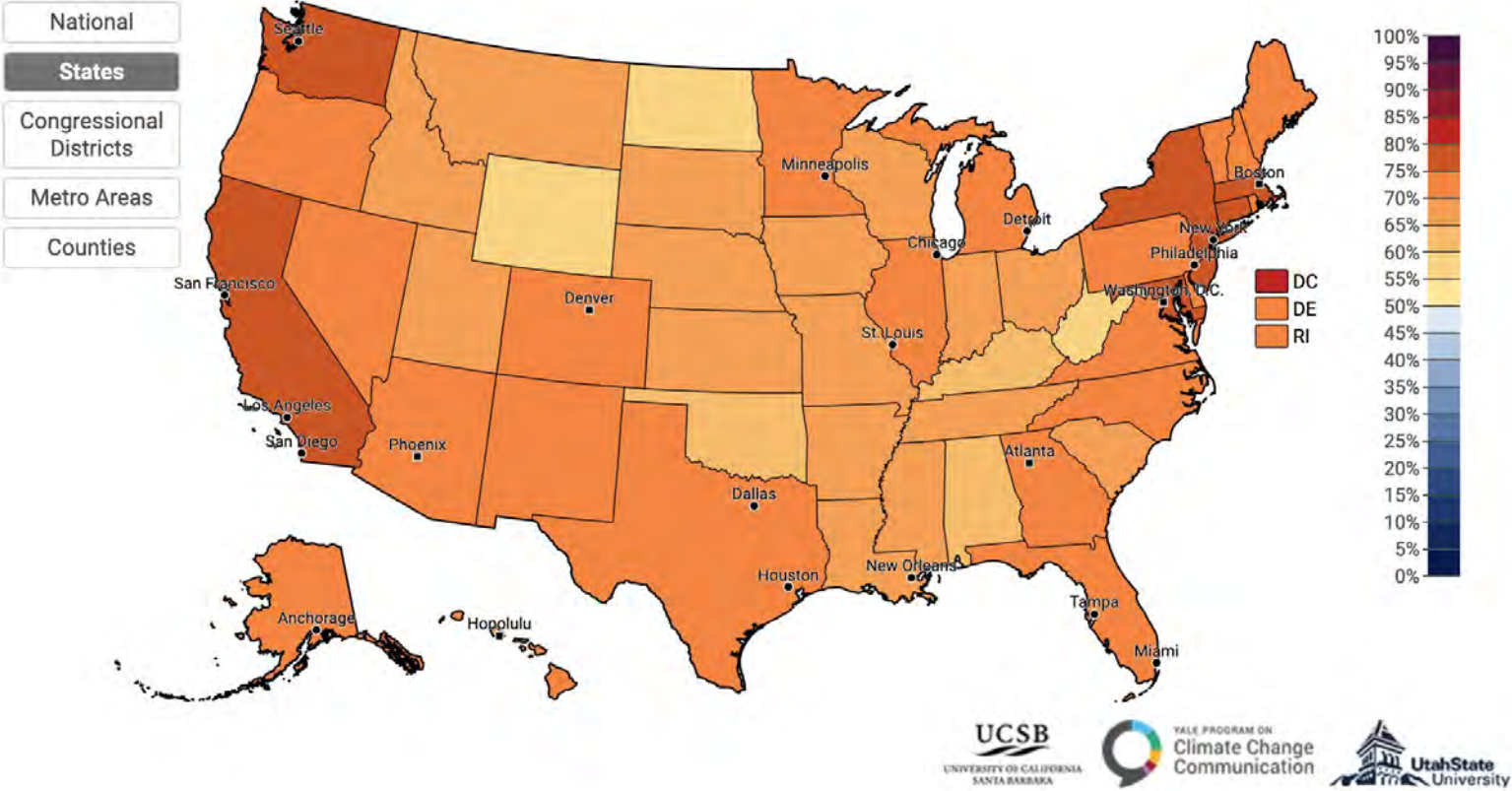
Despite this expectation for positive environmental contribution, the fact of the matter is that for-profit businesses face opposing pressures. Their structure requires them to prioritize profitability, which is often at odds with environmental decisions (Nisbet, 2009).



# Communicating Climate Change

## The Yale Program on Climate Change Communication

This map from the Yale Program shows opinions on “Is global warming happening?”. Nationally, 72% believe global warming is happening. In the states where SERA works, the numbers are better: WA is 75%, OR is 74%, CA is 77%.



# Communicating Climate Change

## The Yale Program on Climate Change Communication

Not only do people believe it's happening, but they are willing to back up their concerns with policy.

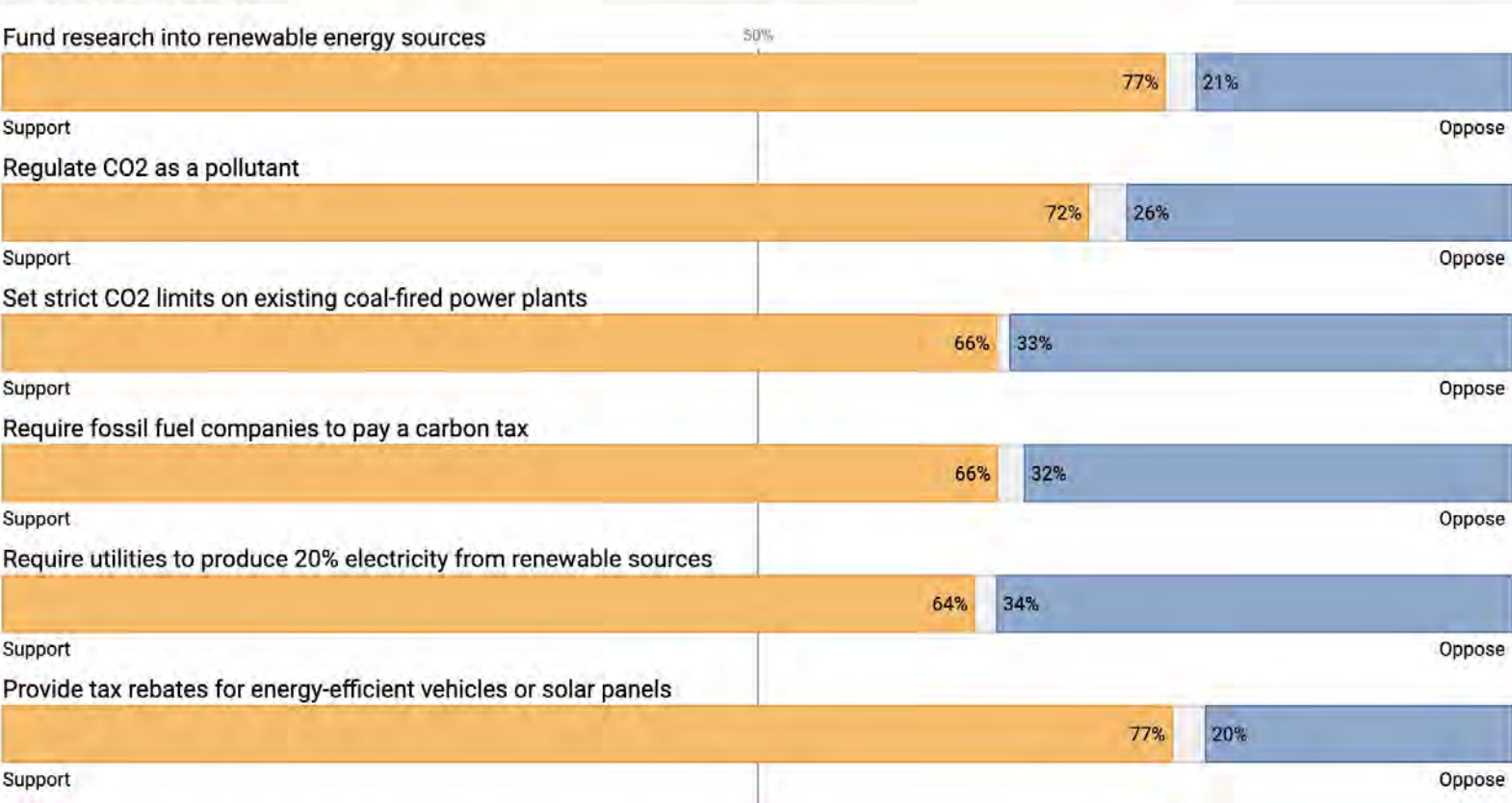
77% believe we should fund research into renewable energy

72% believe we should regulate CO2 as a pollutant

77% believe we should provide tax rebates for energy efficient vehicles or solar panels

So even though we often think about climate change as being a very polarizing issue, that is less the case than we might realize.

### POLICY SUPPORT



# Communicating Climate Change

Marketing departments, in particular, have a reputation issue, as they are often viewed as contributing to the problem of over-consumption. Marketing often functions to convince the public to spend and use more. But as consumers' views of sustainability shift, common perceptions of marketing are also changing, according to Ottman (2017). "To successfully market to environmentally and socially aware consumers credibly and with impact requires first that one no longer view people as mere 'consumers' with insatiable appetites for material goods, but as human beings looking to lead full, healthy lives (p. 45).

Ultimately, researchers argue, marketing should be involved in climate change action, despite the industry's historically conflicting values. Markets, and those who promote them, are fundamentally involved with meeting a community's needs and efficiently distributing resources. In a climate crisis, markets will identify and provide solutions, and in a situation with such dire consequences, communications should not be viewed as marketing manipulation; they're vitally important (Markley Rountree & Koernig, 2014).

## Creating Connections

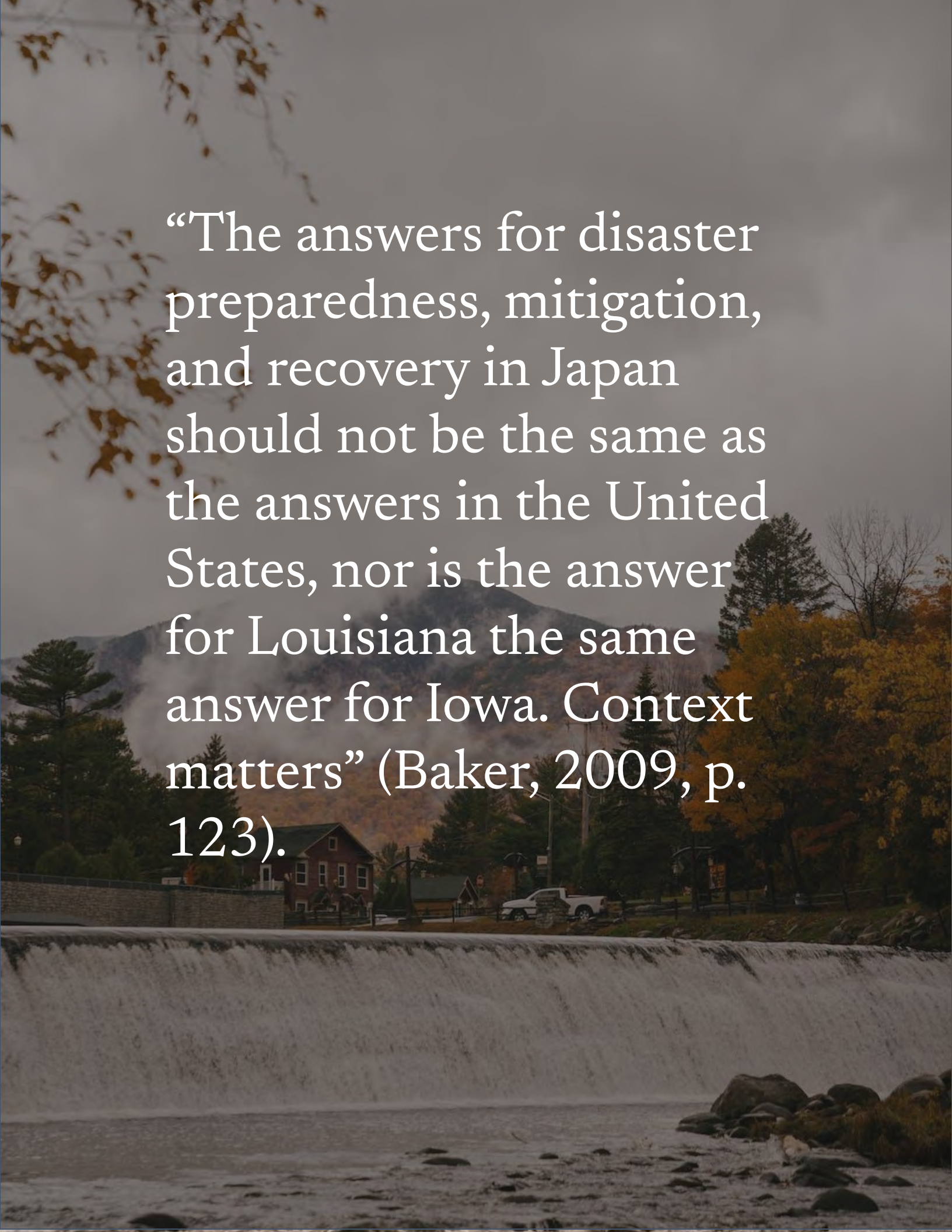
Though businesses face reputational and authority challenges, there are solutions for overcoming them. For-profit businesses can build authority and reputation by creating partnerships with nonprofits, governments, and other community organizations. These organizations can lend their reputation and expertise to support climate change communication efforts.

In this way, businesses involve a broader coalition of organizations, expanding their reach and strengthening their message (Markley Rountree & Koernig, 2014).

Shifting consumer influences also suggest that this expansive community approach is a good idea. Consumer behavior today is more strongly influenced by friends and family (and a more expansive definition of those terms) than ever before. "We used to have to watch TV or read magazines to discover what everyone is into these days. Now we glean this directly from each other. Young people, in particular, tend to share whatever they buy or are intending to buy and get feedback in the form of likes, posts, shares, and tags. (Grant, 2020, p. 30).

Climate action supporters further emphasize the importance of community context when it comes to resilience. Resilience solutions are not a one-size-fits-all approach. Though all communities need access to food, temperature comfort, and clean air and water, barriers to access are community-specific. Part of understanding and defining "disaster" and "vulnerability" is understanding what those terms mean for specific communities.





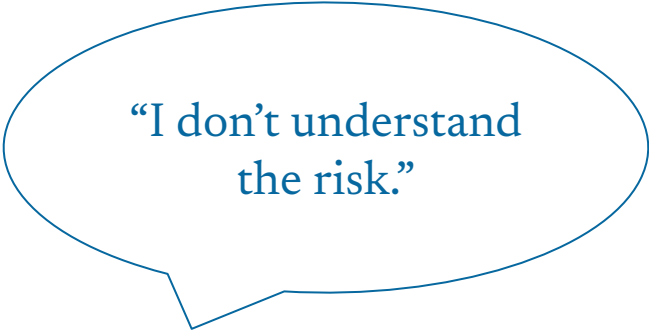
“The answers for disaster preparedness, mitigation, and recovery in Japan should not be the same as the answers in the United States, nor is the answer for Louisiana the same answer for Iowa. Context matters” (Baker, 2009, p. 123).

# Communicating Climate Change

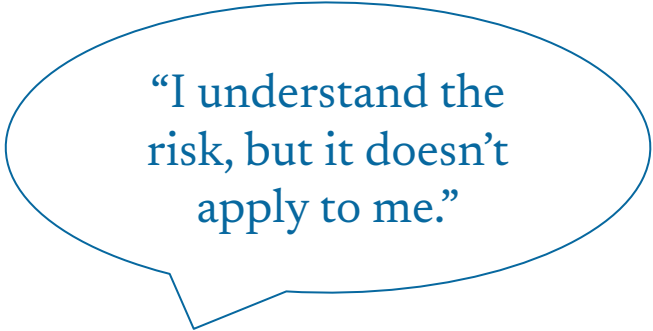
## What does this mean for messaging?

With the understanding that climate change resilience communication is most effective when it is community-driven and inclusive of broader partnerships, the natural question is what should that messaging contain? Extensive research has attempted to advise businesses on how they can strike the right balance of urgency and positivity to inspire action.

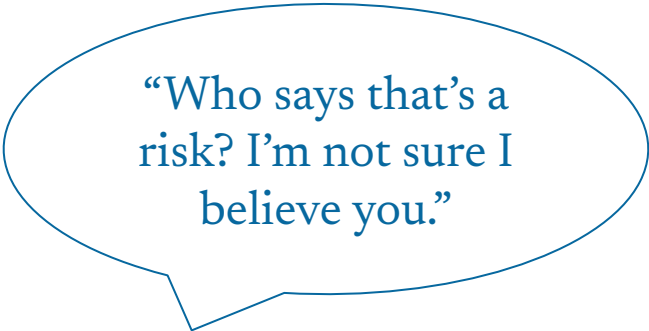
Research indicates that communicators should avoid messages of fear, guilt, and other threats (Moser & Dilling, 2004). When people are informed of a threat, there are several potential emotional reactions that could be barriers to action.



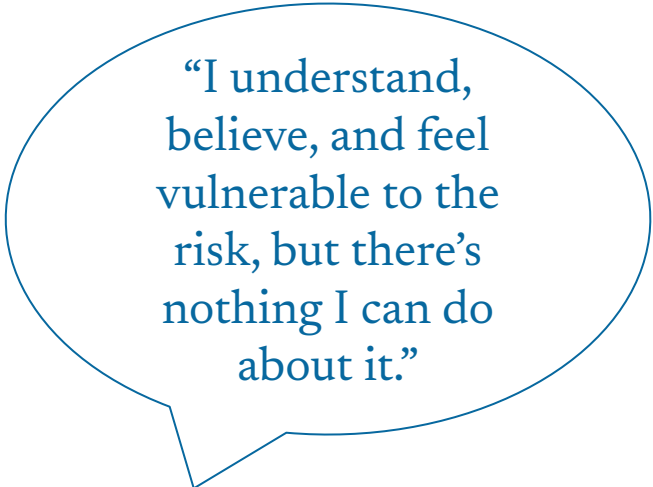
“I don’t understand the risk.”



“I understand the risk, but it doesn’t apply to me.”



“Who says that’s a risk? I’m not sure I believe you.”



“I understand, believe, and feel vulnerable to the risk, but there’s nothing I can do about it.”

# Communicating Climate Change

Paul Slovic's observations of the "psychic numbing" that individuals experience when they are unable to fathom the enormity of an issue is relevant here, as well. Though Slovic's research was around the catastrophe of genocide, the harmful consequences of climate change are similarly difficult to comprehend (Slovic, 2015).

He suggests that the larger the stimulus becomes, the smaller the response. "As psychophysical research indicates, constant increases in the magnitude of a stimulus typically evoke smaller and smaller changes in response" (Slovic, 59). So, the public's avoidance of the realities of climate change does not just represent an unwillingness to face their own vulnerabilities, there is a psychic phenomenon at work.

Slovic goes on to emphasize the importance of stories as tools for building connection and empathy and inspiring action.

But communicators should also be cautious of messages that don't present a clear enough picture of the potential damage. Some argue that the term "climate change" is too neutral and objective, while global "warming" actually might be construed as positive. The phrase "climate chaos" has been dismissed as fear mongering so some climate action supporters have resorted to adding an adjective, as in "disruptive climate change," to convey the threat (Peattie et al., 2009).

Ultimately, communicators vary their messages, trying different solutions for different audiences while holding onto the vision they're attempting to convey. As Moser suggests, "Change rests its conclusions not on a single temperature record or piece of evidence, but on 'a collective picture of a warming world'" (Moser & Dilling, 2004, p. 34).



# Communicating Climate Change

Marketers have created new approaches and modified familiar ones to meet the challenge of communicating about climate change. One of these new strategies is Jacquelyn A. Ottman's "New Rules of Green Marketing" (2017). These strategies include:

1. Know your customer. The community-centric approach of this project aligns with this idea that understanding the customer and its broader community is essential to effective, relevant communication.
2. Appeal to consumers' self-interest. Though we understand that "green" is now mainstream, customers will respond best when they understand how benefits apply to their own health and well-being.
3. Educate and empower. Climate change is a difficult topic to inform the public about, and it presents credibility challenges. For this reason, resilience communication will be most effective if it remains optimistic and focuses on benefits. The primary benefits of resilience in this project are community connection and a sense of positive citizenship.
4. Reassure on performance. This strategy is most important for businesses that sell an alternative product that need to reassure consumers that their "green" product is just as effective as the regular brand.

5. Engage the community. In this resilience hub project, building community connections and highlighting the stories of nonprofits and emergency responders can tell a more relevant story and engage a broader audience.

6. Be credible. Credibility is of the utmost importance. For the resilience hub project, credibility is supported by connections with knowledgeable experts and the lived experiences of climate crisis survivors. Organizations involved in sustainability marketing need to hold themselves to a high standard, though, and the following strategies can be helpful.

Walk your talk.

Be transparent.

Don't mislead.

Enlist the support of third parties.

Promote responsible consumption.

# Communicating Climate Change

Another tool or system of guidelines for marketers regarding climate change is an adjusted version of the traditional 4Ps marketing mix. The researcher who established this adjusted version argues that climate change communicators use social marketing, an approach that aims to do social good, inspiring audience members to engage in pro-climate behaviors, rather than spend money for their own benefit. In social marketing, the 4Ps are transformed as follows. To serve as an example, the social benefit of participating in resilience hub community engagement events is described for each component (Peattie et al., 2009).

1. Products > Social Propositions; We're not focusing on a product, but a social benefit. For users, the social benefit of participating in resilience hub community engagement is the social proposition of a more resilient community.
2. Place > Accessibility; The solution is not a physical product, so it's less connected to a specific location. Instead, we ask if the solution can be accessed. This step would involve communication about how individuals can participate in community engagement events.
3. Price > Social Costs; The costs of changing behavior are not entirely financial. When it comes to social change, the costs are time, energy, and overcoming psychological barriers. In our example, the barrier would be overcoming inertia and overcoming negative emotions about resilience vulnerability.
4. Promotion > Social Communication; Communications to promote social behavior must be social in nature. The tools used for promotion of resilience hub community engagement would need to be social and interactive, potentially including word-of-mouth and social media.

# Target Audience Research

In general, SERA's audience consists of clients (current and potential) and employees (current and potential). Audiences that the firm does not often consider but are relevant for this project are peers in the architecture industry and the general public. In my conversations with architects and planners at SERA, I found that many of them look at other firms' websites and social media accounts to gain an understanding of what is happening in the industry and who might have insights to offer regarding various topics within the industry.

Surveying the general public for this project can give us a good understanding of climate resilience topics that are more broadly compelling.

For this reason, this project conducts audience research in three areas: potential employees, potential clients, and peers/the general public.

## Potential Employees

Primary research on potential employees was conducted via a survey of current University of Oregon architecture students. The goal of this research was to determine the answers to three questions.

1. How familiar are UO architecture students with SERA Architects compared to other architecture firms?
2. How much do architecture students associate SERA with various areas of expertise compared to other firms?
3. Which areas of expertise and employer features are important to potential employees in their search for employment?

For this project, we are primarily interested in determining if potential employees associate SERA Architects with resilience work. However, surveying other areas of expertise will help ensure we have reliable information and survey participants do not become biased by an emphasis on resilience.

To date, the survey has received responses from nine architecture students with the following demographic information.

22% were 22 or younger, 44% were 23-27 years old, 22% were 28-34, and 11% are 35 or older

89% female, 11% male

44% in Portland, 56% in Eugene

33% will be looking for a position at an architecture firm in the next year

### FAMILIARITY

Only one respondent rated themselves "very familiar" with SERA Architects, and two rated themselves "completely unfamiliar."

### SPECIALTY ASSOCIATIONS

Sustainability. Three participants stated that they associate SERA with sustainability. Mithun and ZGF received a similar ranking.

Resilience. Only one participant said they associate SERA with resilience.

The most important specialty to respondents was sustainability, followed by resilience. Respondents also cited compensation and DEI as being important features they look for in an employer.



# Target Audience Research

## Potential Clients

Because the potential client audience is difficult to access, this project conducts secondary research to gain a greater understanding of the needs and concerns of this audience. There are a few questions at the foundation of this research, and first among them is determining the types of organizations that constitute the audience.

1. What types of organizations can access funding for resilience hub projects? Recent legislative changes have responded to the emerging need for climate resilience preparedness with an increase in funding for organizations seeking to provide services to the public. One aspect of the research for this project will explore those funding opportunities and determine the organizations that can access them.
2. What organization types does the public expect to provide climate change resilience services? This question was addressed by this project's general public survey but also through research into existing resilience hubs.
3. What types of organizations have the ability and willingness to partner with communities to create a resilience hub? SERA's vision for resilience hub design is not a "one size fits all" approach. Each community must play an active role in the creation of its hub, so it represents the needs and values of the community. Successful resilience hubs have been designed in partnership with communities through focused community engagement events.

## Funding

SERA has collected information about funding sources for resilience hub projects as part of this effort. The spreadsheet with this information can be found in the appendix. Grants to fund community resilience projects are available from a wide variety of municipal, county, state, and federal government programs.

The firm has also started to collect information about Requests for Proposals that have been issued and awarded. Though this data collection effort is just beginning, county and state governments in Oregon and California have issued RFPs for resilience projects.

## Types of Organizations

In addition to governmental organizations, another potential client type is pseudo-governmental organizations like public utilities. This client type presents a clear opportunity for SERA, which has established relationships with one such organization. This existing relationship points towards one of SERA's strengths—its interdisciplinary nature. Because SERA is comprised of a number of studios that do different kinds of work, resilience hub work can be incorporated into other projects. The strongest opportunity for this partnership is with SERA's Public Studio, but additional opportunities can be explored by connecting with the Housing and Workplace studios.

# Target Audience Research

These partnerships align with some of the primary research results of this project which indicate that users expect governmental organizations to provide resilience services. In our survey, participants indicated they would expect the following organizations to provide resilience services:

1. National governmental organizations (94%)
2. Local utilities (75%)
3. Local institutions (schools, community centers, etc.) (75%)
4. Basic needs businesses (44%)
5. Nonprofit organizations (37.5%)

## Community Partnerships

Because SERA's vision of the most effective, successful resilience hub design is interactive with the community, a level of engagement and connection with the community is essential. Though governmental organizations have a high level of access to and responsibility for the community, they often partner with other organizations to enhance their understanding of communities.

Many nonprofit organizations serve this purpose, building strong connections with community members helping to keep governments more informed of the needs of their constituents. Creating connections with these nonprofit organizations would be an effective way to propose, design, and build resilience hubs that strongly align with the needs of the community.

SERA has already experienced the value of nonprofit organizations in this regard. SERA's work with Greenville, CA, has been supported by the Dixie Fire Collaborative, which coordinates the rebuilding efforts of residents, partners, consultants, and businesses. SERA has also worked with We All Rise, which brings together "key stakeholders on critical infrastructure projects, building trust within complex decision making."

Building community partnerships is particularly important for this project due to the potentially traumatic nature of the community resilience experience. SERA seeks to build relationships with organizations that have experience and expertise with trauma-informed design and planning. Because this market sector is relatively new, expertise in this area is still developing, so SERA has partnered with counselors and therapists that have supported impacted communities.

# Target Audience Research

## Peers and the General Public

This area of research includes two potential audiences for a couple of reasons. Firstly, one aim of this project is to determine which messages about resilience are most compelling to a general audience, with the goal of increasing broad awareness of and value for resilience work in the general public. With solid data about the general public's value for resilience work, it will be easier to convince potential clients that they should invest in resilience hub projects. Additionally, this information will help future clients involve the public in the resilience hub's building, function, use, and maintenance.

Secondly, sifting out the architecture peer audience without skewing results is difficult. LinkedIn would be the most convenient venue for sharing the survey, but the platform identifies employers, which could skew the results.

Instead, the survey was distributed broadly, without attention to industry. The questions focus more generally on resilience awareness and expectations, with the goal of answering the following questions.

1. How often do participants think about their vulnerability to and preparedness for the environmental impacts of climate change? Are there demographic factors that correspond to participants' awareness and preparedness?
2. What organizations do participants expect to provide resilience preparedness and recovery services?
3. Are participants willing to support the development of a resilience hub in their neighborhood?
4. What resilience hub features are most important to participants? What form of content would inspire them to learn more?



# Target Audience Research

## Peers and the General Public

### DEMOGRAPHIC RESULTS

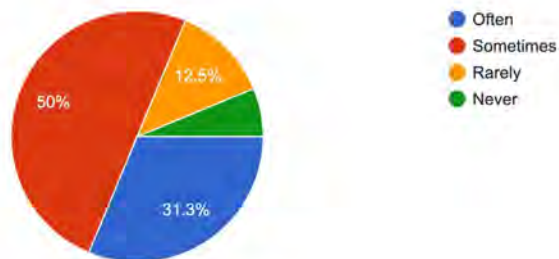
The 16 survey respondents had the following demographic information:

- 50% married, 37.5% single, 12.5% unmarried relationship
- 62.5% without dependents, 37.5% with dependents
- 75% homeowners

### RESILIENCE RESULTS

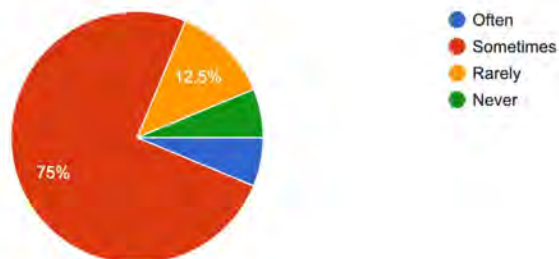
How often do you think about your vulnerability to the environmental impacts of climate change?

16 responses



How often do you think about your preparedness for the environmental impacts of climate change?

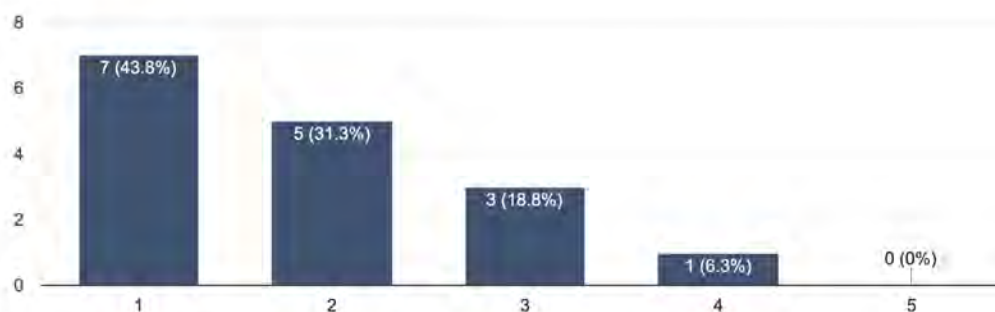
16 responses



# Target Audience Research

On a scale of 1-5, how much have you prepared for a climate disaster? (for example, water or food storage, alternate energy source, evacuation plan)

16 responses



Participants identified the following as the five most important features to find at a location in their neighborhood.

Emergency water access

Emergency power access

Emergency food access

A disaster-resistant structure

Preparedness workshops and classes

Respondents gave a wide variety of answers when asked to consider their own neighborhood and imagine where they would go if they needed climate disaster support.

A school (7)

City hall, library, fire, police station (2)

Community center (1)

A nearby homeless shelter (1)

An open outdoor area with little debris, park (1)

A majority of respondents (68.8%) indicated they would be likely to participate in planning a climate disaster program at a location near them (marking 3 or higher on the Lichert scale).

# Target Audience Research

## RESILIENCE MESSAGING

Based on an observation of commonly used messaging formats and topics, respondents were asked what types of content would make them most curious to learn more about climate resilience.

These were the most popular answers:

An article with actionable tips for increasing their level of climate disaster preparedness

A live event or workshop about climate disaster preparedness

A podcast or video about climate disaster preparedness

These questions were structured to determine two different features of resilience communications.

- What form is most compelling? Do people prefer to consume this content more passively, or do they prefer more interactive options?
- What content is most compelling? Do people connect more with information about preparedness or information about effects and experiences?

The results of this survey did not indicate a clear preference with regard to the form of communication. The most popular responses included active (live event) and passive (article) communication formats, including a physical flyer.

Respondents clearly preferred action-oriented messages about preparedness over the details, effects, or stories about climate disasters.

## Messaging Recommendations

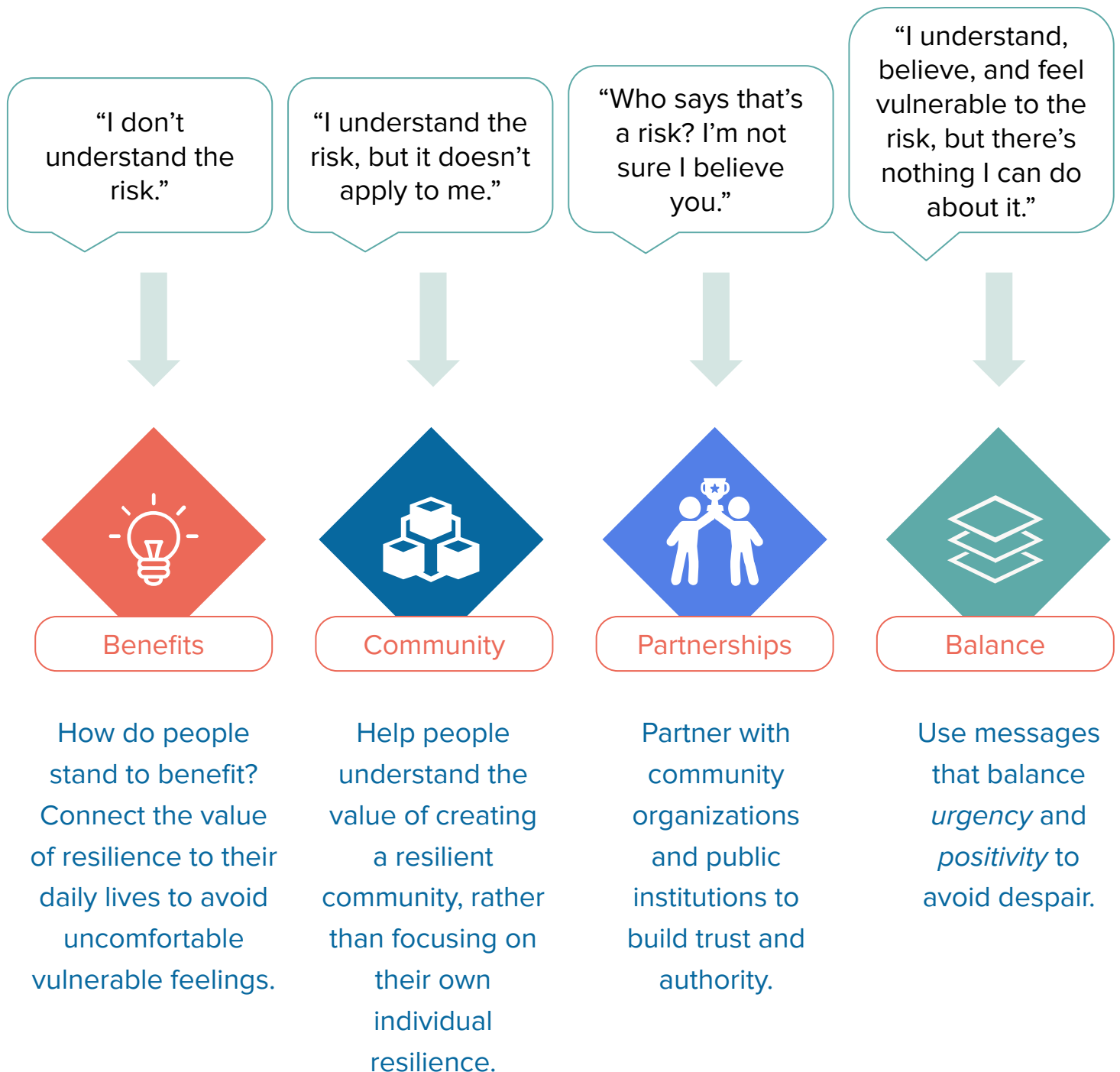
Primary and secondary research point towards the following recommendations for communicating about resilience hubs with the general public.

- Action-oriented, emphasizing the benefits of preparedness over detailed disaster experiences
- Community-focused, created with the specific community's needs in mind, emphasizing the benefits of a resilient community
- Varied formats, tending toward greater interaction, including word-of-mouth. Podcast & Video, Flyers, Articles & Blogs



# Messaging Recommendations

The primary and secondary research point towards community-focused, action-oriented messages that don't force the audience to face their vulnerability. These messages address some of the common responses to climate change communication.





# The Communications Plan

Executive Summary

Value Proposition and Position Statement

Goal, Objectives, and Key Results

Theme

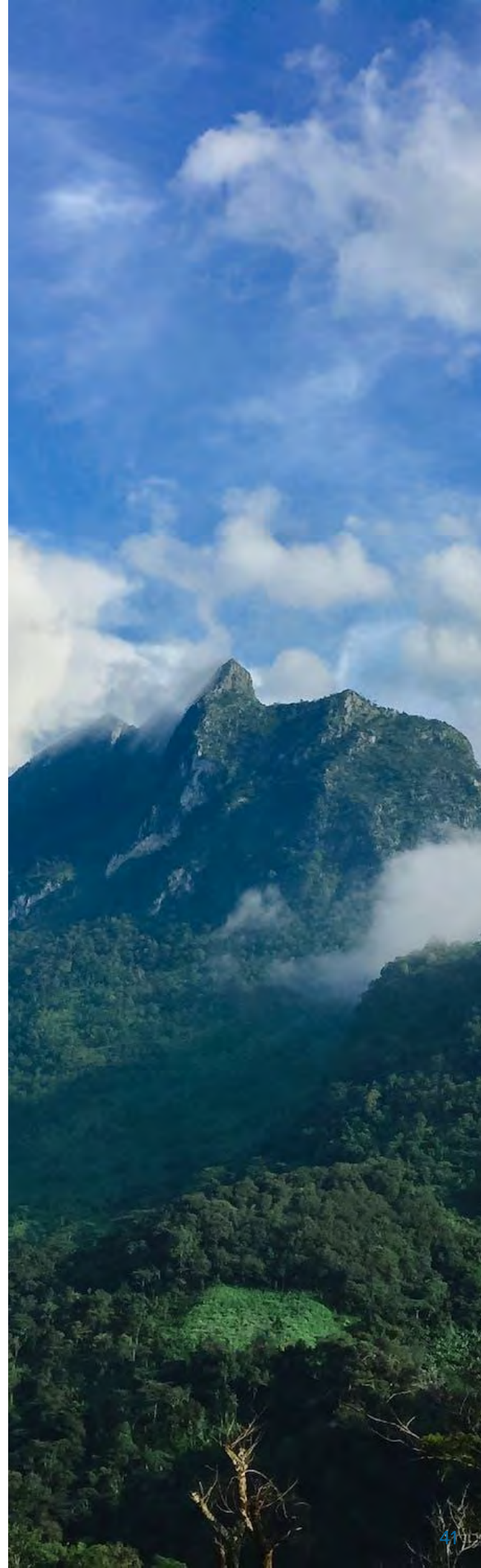
Target Audiences

Strategies and Tactics

Budget

Evaluation

Summary



# Executive Summary, Value Proposition, and Positioning Statement

## Executive Summary

Growing awareness of the harmful impacts of climate change and community vulnerabilities presents an opportunity for SERA Architects. By building awareness of resilience hubs as well as SERA's skill, experience, and unique approach to creating community resilience, the firm can uphold its values and engage in project work that contributes to a more resilient world.

## Value Proposition and Positioning Statement

SERA's resilience hub design brings out the best in the community by connecting them with each other whether they're facing everyday life as usual, a traumatic disruption, or a period of recovery and rebuilding. With this emphasis on preparation and community-building, we help people become more resilient, engaged with their communities, and confident about facing the future.

For organizations who seek to partner with or hire us for a resilience hub project, we help make organizational values of service and protection a reality, improving public sentiment and brand reputation.



# Goals & Objectives

Goal: To build recognition for SERA Architects as a leader in the growing field of resilience hub design.



## Objective #1

During 2023, build awareness of resilience hubs, why they're important, and how they support communities.



## Objective #2

During 2023, demonstrate SERA's skill, experience, and unique approach to resilience hub design.



## Objective #3

Win at least one resilience hub project in 2023.

# Key Results

## Objective #1: Awareness

During 2023, build awareness of resilience hubs, why they're important, and how they support communities.

## Objective #2: SERA

During 2023, demonstrate SERA's skill, experience, and unique approach to resilience hub design.

## Objective #3: Project

Win at least one resilience hub project in 2023.

## Key Results

Online engagement with resilience hub content has increased

Relationship built and content shared with at least two community nonprofits

Resilience hub approach is defined and expressed in materials to be shared with 100% of internal teams, clients (existing and potential), and partners.

Materials have been presented at an internal all-staff meeting.

Materials have been presented to at least three clients and/or partners.

SERA has a contract in place to plan/design at least one resilience hub project.

# Themes

As the research in this project has shown, communicating about the impacts of climate change is challenging. Effective messages will combine just the right amount of urgency with action-oriented solutions that inspire individuals to act.

“We’re more resilient than the sum of our parts.”

Together, we are more resilient and can withstand the threats of the future. When we know each other, we understand who we are as a community, and we can bring together all of the parts that will make us stronger as a whole.

This messaging reflects SERA’s unique approach to resilience hub design, which is modular, flexible, and responsive to individual community needs.

“How resilient is your neighbor?”

This community-focused messaging allows SERA to convey the risks of climate change without scaring the audience away by forcing them to recognize their own individual vulnerabilities. Presenting an actionable vision for how people can contribute to making a more resilient community allows them to connect with values of citizenship, neighborliness, and kindness.

Communications will encourage the audience to think about the needs of the people who live around them and consider how getting involved in a community resilience hub project will strengthen the neighborhood in which they live.

Because this messaging is designed to appeal to the broadest audience, it will speak to the multiplicity of audiences this communications plan addresses, including internal stakeholders, clients (existing and potential), and partners.



# Audiences

## Potential Clients and Nonprofit Partners

As this project's primary research revealed, many people would expect that governmental institutions would provide resilience services during a disruption. Often, these organizations rely on nonprofit partners to facilitate engagement with the community on planning projects, making these partners an excellent audience for this communications plan. SERA has participated in many community engagement projects with nonprofit partners who ultimately convey community needs to governmental organizations.

These nonprofit partners, with their focus on the community, will resonate most with the same community-focused messages that support their work with community members. SERA's communications with these partners should emphasize how the firm can help facilitate community engagement activities.

## The Public

Potential clients and the nonprofit partners who work with them respond to the needs of the community so this communications plan aims to build resilience hub awareness among a broad general audience as well.

## Internal Teams and Peers

Whether they work with hotels, multi-family housing, or office buildings, SERA teams will support firm goals by understanding how a resilience hub could be incorporated into their projects.

Peers in the industry are another audience that can have an impact on SERA's reputation with regards to resilience hubs. This is an audience that our website and industry events appeal to.

# Strategies & Tactics

## Web Content Strategy

## Community Engagement Strategy

## Proposal Strategy

### Audiences

Internal Teams,  
Peers, Public

Internal Teams,  
Peers, Clients and  
Partners

Clients, Partners,  
Internal

### Objectives

#1: Awareness  
#2: SERA

#1: Awareness  
#2: SERA  
#3: Project

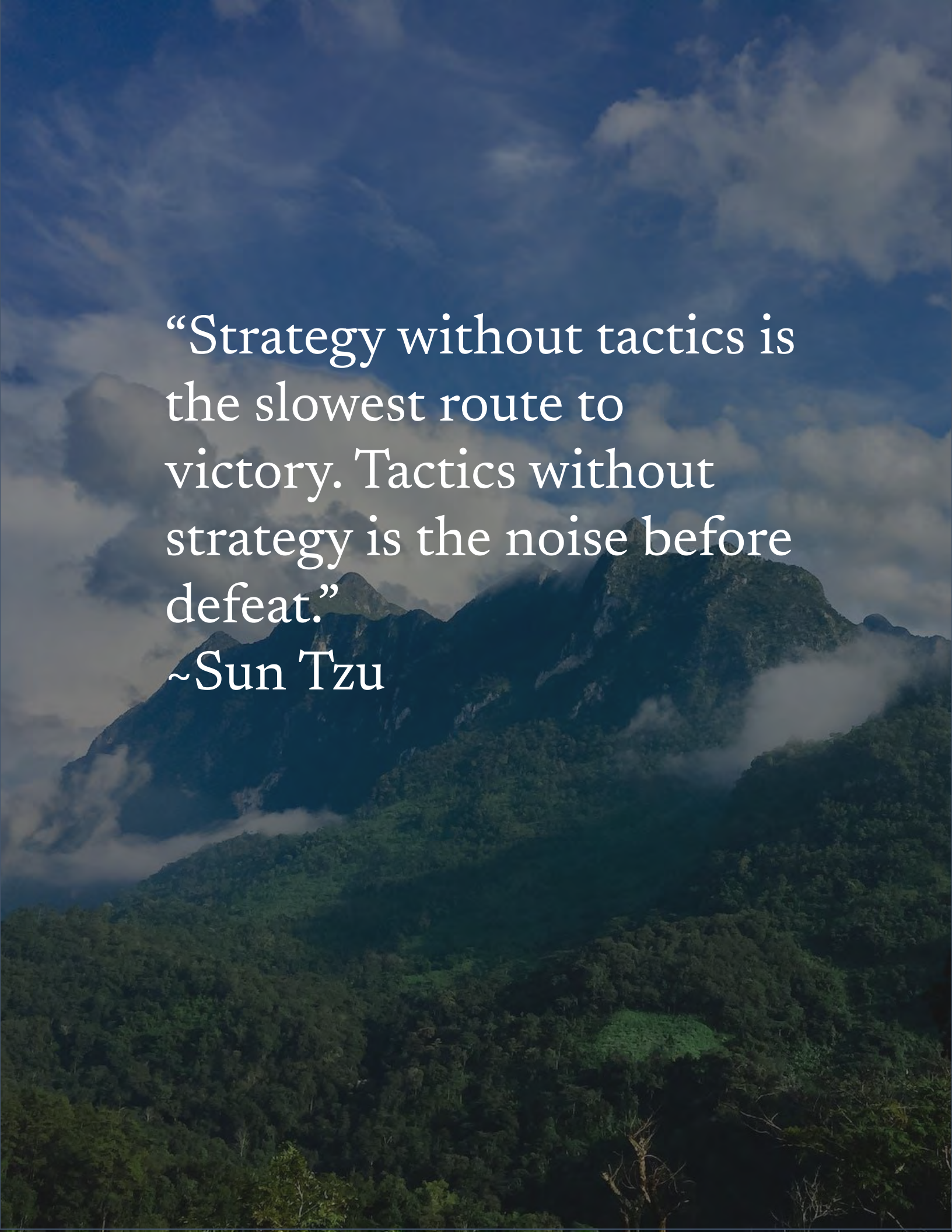
#2: SERA  
#3: Project

### Tactics

Blog posts  
Web Page

Community  
engagement guide  
Conference  
presentations

Resilience hub  
one-sheet  
Pitch deck



“Strategy without tactics is  
the slowest route to  
victory. Tactics without  
strategy is the noise before  
defeat.”

~Sun Tzu





# Tactics

Blog Posts

Web Page

Community Engagement Guide

Conference Presentations

Proposal One-Sheet

Resilience Hub Pitch Deck





# Tactic #1: Blog Posts

## Overview



### Objective #1

During 2023, build awareness of resilience hubs, why they're important, and how they support communities.



### Objective #2

During 2023, demonstrate SERA's skill, experience, and unique approach to resilience hub design.

## AUDIENCES

### Internal teams, Clients and Partners, Peers

SERA's blog, hosted on the firm's website [www.seradesign.com](http://www.seradesign.com), is one of the firm's primary avenues for sharing new ideas. Posts provide a simple way to share information with a broad audience.

For this tactic, we propose two sets of three blog posts. First, an overview of resilience hubs with a post dedicated to each of the resilience hub modes. The blogs will create a picture of the function of the resilience hub in the form of a "day in the life" story. SERA will share these blogs on its social media channels (Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter) and track performance.

The blog posts will feature renderings, user profiles, quotes, and a narrative that explains how the hub functions and meets the needs of the community.

The second series of posts will demonstrate what a resilience hub might look like in three different environments—rural, suburban, and urban. SERA clients and the general public that is the audience for this tactic exist in all three of those environments, so this series of posts is an important tactic for helping them understand what a resilience hub would look like in their community.

Finally, we'll also produce a blog post about funding for resilience hubs, outlining the various options and how SERA can help clients access this funding.

# Tactic #1: Blog Posts

## Workplan

Topic	Writer	SME	Drafted	Reviewed	Published
Intro, Modes: Disruption	MFP	MP	6/2/2023	6/9/2023	6/16/2023
Environments: Rural	MFP	ER	6/16/2023	6/23/2023	6/30/2023
Modes: Every Day	MFP	TS	6/30/2023	7/7/2023	7/14/2023
Environments: Urban	MFP	TS	7/14/2023	7/21/2023	7/28/2023
Modes: Recovery	MFP	ER	7/28/2023	8/4/2023	8/11/2023
Environments: Suburb	MFP	MP	8/11/2023	8/18/2023	8/25/2023
Funding	MFP	TS	8/25/2023	9/1/2023	9/8/2023



### SERA and Just: the intersection of diversity and inclusion

by SERA | April 4, 2023 0 Ideas

Since 2019, SERA has participated in the Just program, a voluntary disclosure tool directed by the International Living Futures Institute (ILFI), that helps organizations measure and track their progress toward goals around diversity and inclusion, equity, employee health and benefits, stewardship, and purchasing. The program provides clear methods and structured metrics for accomplishing some pretty [...]

This recent post on SERA's blog will provide an excellent basis of comparison. The post about SERA's DEI efforts was posted on April 7 and yielded the following stats:

Impressions: unavailable at this time  
Comments: 0

It was shared on SERA's LinkedIn feed on May 4.

Impressions: 1628  
Reactions: 50  
Reposts: 1  
Clicks: 103  
Engagement rate: 9.45%

# Tactic #1: Blog Posts

## Budget

*See Appendix for full budget*

Copywriting (in-house): \$50/hour x 4 hours per post x 3 posts = \$600

Subject matter expert input: \$75/hour x 1 hour per post x 3 posts = \$225

Timeline: This blog series will be published during the summer of 2023, throughout June, July, and August. This timing aligns with when resilience is top of mind for the Pacific Northwest, during fire season.

## Timeline

Aligning with the work plan on the previous page, this blog series will be published during the summer of 2023, throughout June, July, and August. This timing aligns with when resilience is top of mind for the Pacific Northwest, during fire season.

## Evaluation

Key Questions:

- Are these blog posts being viewed by these audiences?
- Does the content create the awareness identified in the objectives?

The following practices will assess if this tactic contributed to the objectives.

Qualitative measures

- Conduct surveys assessing awareness of resilience hubs (Objective #1) and SERA's expertise (Objective #2) with all audiences before and after blog series publication to determine the change in awareness.
- Awareness survey results
- Blog and social media comments

Quantitative Measures

- Web traffic 10% greater than other blog posts within two weeks of posting
- Number of likes, comments, and shares on social media and website

# Tactic #2: Web Page

## Overview



### Objective #1

During 2023, build awareness of resilience hubs, why they're important, and how they support communities.



### Objective #2

During 2023, demonstrate SERA's skill, experience, and unique approach to resilience hub design.

## AUDIENCES

### Internal Teams, Peers, Public

Generally, clients for resilience hub projects are not likely to learn about SERA's offerings via the website, so this tactic is designed to accomplish the goals of increasing awareness with a broader audience.

The tactic will include the following content, much of which will be repurposed from blog content.

WHY: Why resilience hubs are important.

WHAT: SERA's unique design approach to resilience hub design.

HOW: SERA's community engagement process.

WHO: Profiles of SERA's resilience planning team and community partners

The web page will serve a few purposes:

- A place to direct interested parties when the resilience hub planning team speaks at events
- A place where internal teams can stay abreast on SERA's resilience hub work
- A resource for peers and the public to learn more about resilience hubs

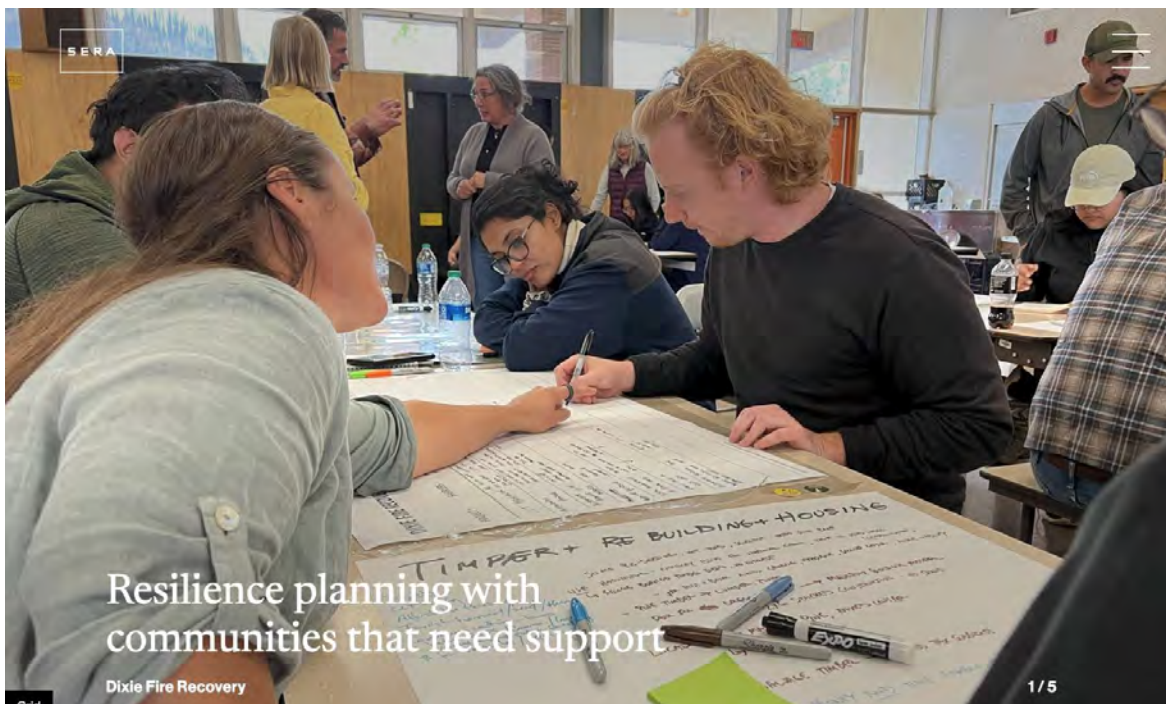


# Tactic #2: Web Page

## Workplan

Component	Content	SME	Graphics	Deadline
What is a resilience hub?	MFP	n/a	AS	6/15/2023
SERA's unique design approach	MFP	TS	AS	
Community Engagement	MFP	ER	ER	
Partners and Projects	MFP	MP	MP	
Environments	MFP	TS	AS	9/1/2023
Presentation download	MFP	ER, MP	AS, MP, ER`	9/1/2023

SERA's new website is launching during the summer of 2023. This photo, taken during a community engagement session, is the kind of content that will be featured on the site that will demonstrate SERA's approach to this kind of work.



# Tactic #2: Web Page

## Budget

*See Appendix for full budget*

Note: Graphics and visuals will repurpose content created for other tactics in this plan so are not included here.

Copywriting (in-house): \$50/hour x 4 hours = \$200

Web design (in-house): \$50/hour x 1 hour = \$50

Total: \$250

Other expenses to consider include website hosting and web redesign costs, which SERA already pays for, so would contribute minimally to the expense of this effort.

## Timeline

SERA's new website launches this summer. Website content will repurpose graphics created for other tactics in this plan, coordinating with the website launch.

## Evaluation

Key Questions:

- Are internal teams, peers, and the general public viewing the web page?
- Does the content create the awareness identified in the objectives?

The following practices will assess if this tactic contributed to the objectives.

Evaluation Tasks

- Conduct surveys assessing awareness of resilience hubs (Objective #1) and SERA's expertise (Objective #2) with all audiences before and after blog series publication to determine the change in awareness.
- Track web traffic with the goal of having 10% more traffic within two weeks, compared to other web pages.

# Tactic #3: Community Engagement Guide

## Overview



### Objective #1

During 2023, build awareness of resilience hubs, why they're important, and how they support communities.



### Objective #2

During 2023, demonstrate SERA's skill, experience, and unique approach to resilience hub design.



### Objective #3

Win at least one resilience hub project in 2023.

## AUDIENCES

### Clients and Partners, Internal Teams & Peers

This community engagement guide would describe the process of involving the community in a resilience hub project. It would outline how SERA's project approach is responsive to the community's needs and demonstrates how project teams and partners can collect information from the community. When they see that SERA has a plan for doing the work that is often part of their responsibility, nonprofit partners will want to engage with SERA and will more confidently advocate for resilience hub projects with communities and clients.

In this way, this tactic supports both marketing efforts and project implementation.

# Tactic #3: Community Engagement Guide

## Workplan

Task	Deadline
Consult <a href="#">AIA guide to community engagement</a>	6/30/2023
Meet with community engagement partners to understand their process	6/30/2023
Consult <a href="#">community engagement best practices from Groundwork USA</a> (in appendix)	6/30/2023
Write and format guide	7/30/2023
Share guide with community engagement partners for feedback	7/30/2023
Test guide on project work (conditional upon project work)	8/30/2023
Adjust guide based on feedback	9/30/2023

One of SERA's most successful engagement efforts is reflected in the Jade District Visioning Plan and the development of Orchards of 82nd in Southeast Portland. The District is a Neighborhood Prosperity Initiative area, funded with tax-increment financed revenues and designed to address historic underinvestment through community-driven action. SERA designers, in partnership with community-based organizers, led focus groups for a community-defined vision for the District by engaging the diversity of the District through ethnic/racial-specific events.

Orchards of 82nd (family-oriented affordable housing) evolved from the Jade District Vision and was designed to help revitalize the neighborhood and establish a new pattern of development—bridging the robust commercial arteries to their quiet residential surroundings. Historically, some of the neighborhood concerns were contentious, the conversations were hard, and not all neighborhood interests aligned with the development constraints. However, during the design process, the team was able to show the community how their feedback and concerns were reflected in the final design. After seven community-based work sessions, the design team was able to align all the community priorities.

Today, Orchards is home to dozens of families and a multicultural space run by the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO). Completed in 2019, the four-story development features 48 affordable units and ground-floor community space (owned and managed by APANO). The unit mix is oriented around young families and thus features primarily one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments.



# Tactic #3: Community Engagement Guide

## Budget

*See Appendix for full budget*

Copywriting (in-house): \$50/hour x 10 hours = \$500

Subject matter expert input: \$75/hour x 5 hours = \$425

Review with nonprofit partners for input: \$200/hour (team labor) x 2 hours = \$400

Total: \$1150

## Timeline

This guide is to be developed over the course of Summer 2023, allowing time for input from community partners and testing on project work. The workplan on the previous page details the specifics of the timeline.

## Evaluation

Because this tactic serves multiple purposes, it will require a more robust review process, including reviewing after project implementation.

### FOR PARTNERS

Did nonprofit partners engage with SERA on a resilience hub project?

Did the community engagement guide persuade nonprofit partners to work with SERA on a resilience hub project?

Understanding nonprofit partner behavior before and after being presented with the community engagement guide is essential to understanding the effectiveness of this tactic. The community engagement guide will be presented to nonprofit partners in a resilience hub project pitch conversation, following initial preliminary expressions of interest. The goal will be that 50% of nonprofit partners who have been presented with the community engagement guide reach out to continue the resilience hub project conversation.

### FOR INTERNAL TEAMS

Did internal teams view and understand the community engagement guide?

Did internal teams pitch clients and nonprofit partners with a resilience hub project after viewing the guide?

The goal for this audience will be that three internal teams pitched clients and/or nonprofit partners with a resilience hub project after viewing the guide.

# Tactic #4: Conference Presentations

## Overview

### Objective #2

During 2023,  
demonstrate SERA's skill,  
experience, and unique  
approach to resilience  
hub design.

#### AUDIENCES

## Partners and Peers

The goal for this tactic is to have the resilience planning team present at industry events mostly attended by partners and peers. The group has begun collecting a list of possible speaking opportunities.

Portland Urban Design Panel

San Francisco Bay Area Planning and Urban  
Research Association (SPUR)

Urban Land Institute (California, Oregon, national)

American Planning Association (California, Oregon,  
national)

American Institute of Architects (AIA, California,  
Oregon, national)

International Living Future Institute conference

Association of Oregon Counties

National Emergency Management Association

International City/County Management Association

### Objective #3

Win at least one  
resilience hub project in  
2023.

At these organizations and events, SERA's planners could present their vision of resilience hub design and build connections and partnerships with peers and partners. Though most of these events do not present opportunities to connect with potential clients, speaking at them would increase visibility and work towards establishing SERA as a thought leader in the area.

The initial goal is for SERA's resilience planners to present at two industry events in 2023. The events will include an opportunity for attendees to receive more information about resilience hubs in exchange for an email address.

# Tactic #4: Conference Presentations

This effort has already begun with a speaking proposal submitted to the Urban Land Institute's Fall Meeting. This submittal will serve as a framework for other efforts, a more detailed list of which can be found in the appendix.

## Title: Resilience as a Pathway to Revitalization

Communities across the country are struggling with economic uncertainty, while also grappling with their vulnerability to ever-increasing extreme climate events. Our panel will discuss the complexities of these issues while exploring how a fresh look at infrastructure and community-based resources could provide holistic benefits for physical, economic, and social needs. With an expanded definition of what resilience can mean, we'll introduce a resilient hub concept that can adapt to a community's and region's needs, and captures the energy of the place to move towards a model of regeneration and revitalization.

## Presenters

- Resilience planners
- Rural community representative
- Government official

## Session Objectives

- Understand the relationship between resilience and community revitalization
- Identify ways we can introduce/integrate resilience to an existing community fabric
- Introduce a conceptual framework for creating resilience hubs to serve daily, emergency, and recovery needs

## Keywords

- Infrastructure
- Placemaking
- Sustainability
- Technology

# Tactic #4: Conference Presentations

## Budget

*See Appendix for full budget*

Labor:	Travel and Fees:
Presentation deck preparation:	Airfare: \$500 x 2 tickets x 2 conferences = \$2000
Resilience team (content and project management): \$70/hour x 10 hours = \$700	Lodging: \$200/night x 2 nights x 2 conferences = \$800
Copywriter: \$50/hour x 5 hours = \$250	Conference attendance fees: \$500 x 2 tickets x 2 conferences = \$2000
Practice and feedback: \$120/hour x 2 hours = \$240	Note: Several of the above opportunities are local and do not require airfare or lodging.
Conference attendance time: \$70 x 96 hours = \$6720 x 2 people = \$13,440	

## Timeline

Speaking opportunities will be reviewed each year in January as part of the business development process for the coming year. In January 2024, the team will review the engagements that happened, evaluate their effectiveness, and identify opportunities for the coming year.

## Evaluation

SERA will submit three speaking proposals for conferences in 2023. SERA will review feedback if proposals are not accepted.

### Key Questions

Were speaking proposals accepted and delivered?

Was the audience receptive?

Did the speaking engagement increase awareness of resilience hubs and SERA's expertise in the area among the public and potential partner organizations.

Did the speaking engagement lead to resilience hub project opportunities?

This tactic will be considered a success if:

Resilience planners presented at two industry events.

Presentations were well-attended. (Metrics depend on the event and will be determined prior to each engagement. Generally, the standard will be attendance similar to or greater than similar presentations.)

Each presentation led to 10% of the audience submitting an email address for more information.



# Tactic #5: Proposal One-Sheet

## Overview

### Objective #3

Win at least one  
resilience hub project in  
2023.

## AUDIENCES

### Clients, Partners, Internal Teams

This one-sheet summary of SERA's resilience hub offering will be included in project proposals that have a resilience component. The one sheet will include the following:

- A narrative about SERA's approach to resilience hub design
  - Photos of community engagement events
  - Renderings of SERA's resilience hub design
  - Resumes and biographical information about the resilience hub team
  - Sample projects
- As other SERA teams encounter more projects that have a resilience component, which is becoming increasingly common, they will learn more about SERA's resilience hub offering and consider including it in future proposals.

# Tactic #5: Proposal One-Sheet

Below is a beginning mock-up of what this one sheet might include. A sample one-sheet document from a project proposal is in the appendix.

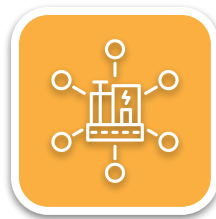
## SERA and Resilience Hubs

Resilience Hubs are community-serving facilities augmented to: support residents and coordinate resource distribution and services before, during, or after a natural hazard event. SERA considers them a heart and hub within the community, **integral to community culture**, that is designed to help weather the shocks and stresses unique to that place.

### Resilience Hub Components



Modular Design



Utility Corridor



Building Shell



SERA has developed a robust community engagement process that we've applied to resilience and wildfire recovery work.



Tim Smith

Tim is a certified planner with more than 30 years of professional experience. He draws upon training in architecture, city and regional planning, and urban design to craft solutions to complex planning and design problems.



Erin Reome

Erin is an experienced and skilled project manager who is able to lead clients, stakeholders, and consultant teams through tailor-made collaborative processes that answer complex planning questions with authority.

# Tactic #5: Proposal One-Sheet

## Budget

Copywriting: \$50/hour x 10 hours = \$500

Design: \$50/hour x 5 hours = \$250

Graphics creation: \$50/hour x 40 hours = \$2000  
(These graphics will be repurposed in other aspects of this communications plan.)

## Evaluation

### Key Questions

How many proposals did SERA submit that included this one-sheet?

How many of those proposals were won or lost?

What kind of feedback did we receive about our lost proposals?

## Timeline

Graphics creation: 2 weeks

Copywriting and design: 1 week

Completed by June 1, 2023

This tactic will be considered a success if:

The one-sheet was included in at least five project proposals.

At least one of those projects was won.

### *Sample SERA project:*

*SERA led the multi-disciplinary design team for the Sisters Cascade Ave streetscape improvements. We began by exploring multiple Downtown themes, ultimately selecting a Western theme based on community input.*



# Tactic #6: Resilience Hub Pitch Deck

## Overview

### Objective #3

Win at least one  
resilience hub project in  
2023.

## AUDIENCES

### Clients, Partners, Internal Teams

The pitch deck will be a more robust explanation of the SERA's resilience hub offering and will be used in client interviews. Because there are a number of different client types for this project, the deck will be customized before each presentation. The content will vary somewhat depending on client type. The community organizations' pitch deck content is listed below.

- Team bios
- Resilience definition
- Potential hazards
- Hub overview
- Community engagement process
- Identification of needs
- Possible programming
- Benefits
- Example process (site identification, engagement, vulnerability assessment)
- Function overview

**Concept: The Recipe**

**The Big Ideas**

- Can fit a community's needs and be a catalyst for revitalization
- Is contained by a shell that can take many forms - from pre-manufactured to adaptive re-use.
- Are anchored by a utility spine that allows additional program to expand over time and provide the community with local energy, resources, and back-up systems in an emergency.
- Can be organized in a network and contains modular program elements that can flex, grow, change out, or evacuate.

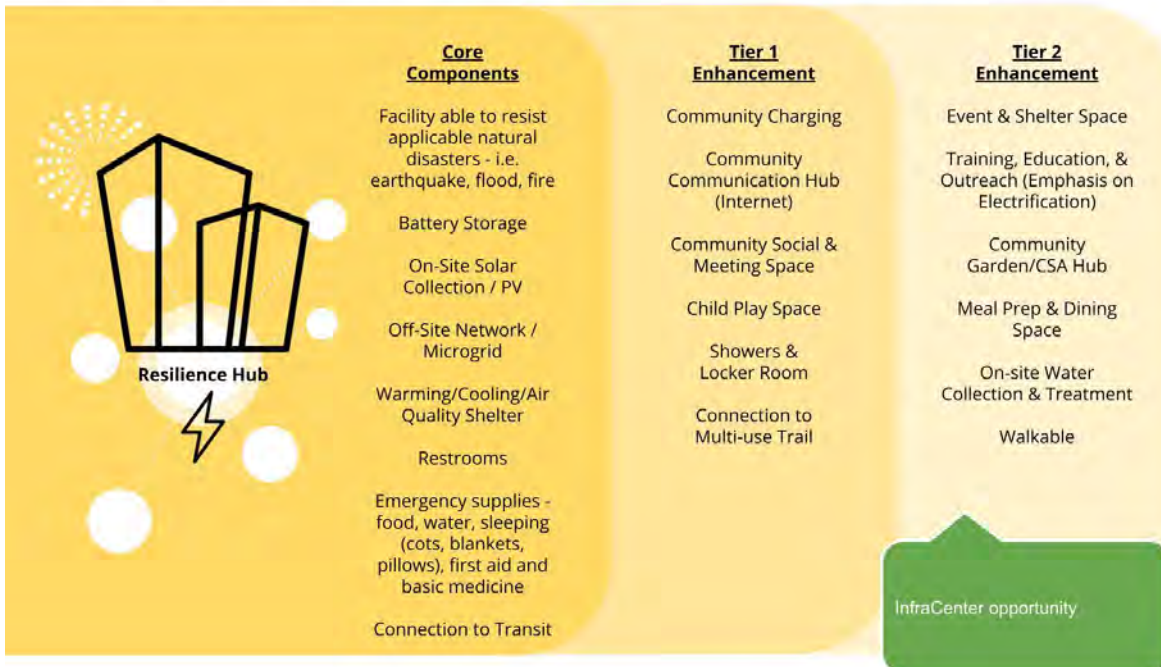
Components	 Shell (New Build / Reuse)	 InfraCenter (Utility Spine)	 Modular Program (Predetermined or Custom)
Scales	<b>S</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>L</b> <b>XL</b>
Context	Rural  Urban		

Sample slide



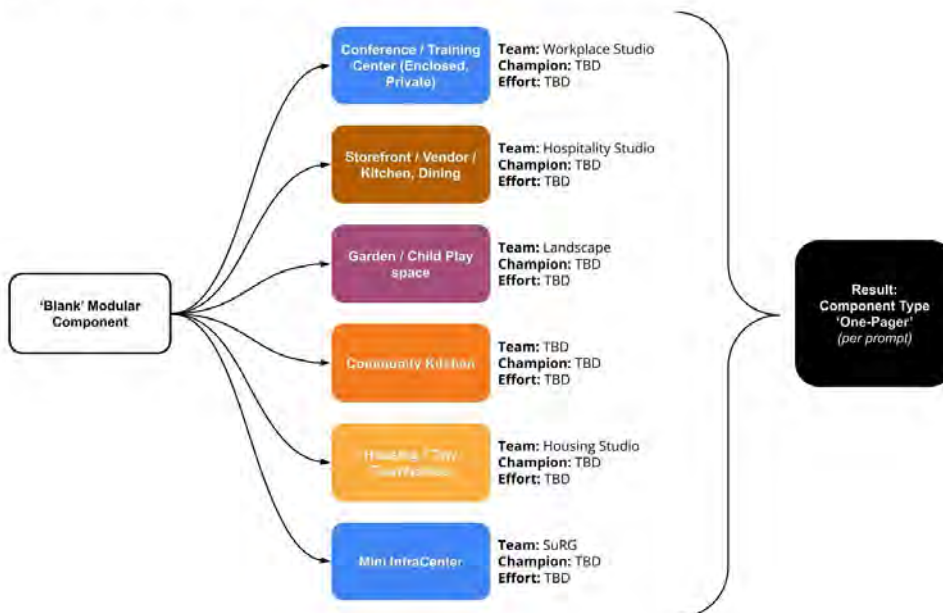
# Tactic #6: Resilience Hub Pitch Deck

## Concept: Utility Spine - Basic Needs in Event and Recovery



*This graphic depiction of the modular aspect of the resilience hub concept shows potential clients what a resilience hub project might offer their community.*

## Concept: Firm / Studio Prompt



*This chart shows internal teams how a resilience hub might fit into their project work.*

# Tactic #6: Resilience Hub Pitch Deck

## Budget

Copywriting: \$50/hour x 5 hours = \$250

Design: \$50/hour x 5 hours = \$250

## Evaluation

### Key Questions

How many times was the pitch deck presented?

How many of those presentations led to a project?

## Timeline

Overview content creation: 1 week

Customization required before each use

Completed by June 1, 2023

This tactic will be considered a success if:

The pitch deck was presented to clients or nonprofit partners at least five times.

At least one of those presentations led to a resilience hub project.

## Concept: Modular Program Units

### Modular Program Units:

- Can be selected and customized for need of each place
- Can be mobile to share across towns or evacuate as needed
  - Can be moved by train car or large pick-up truck trailer
- Can be individually funded per business with grants
- Can grow, expand, and change over time
- Can be manufactured locally



*A description of the possible programming modules.*

# Budget

The budget for each tactic is summarized on the following pages.

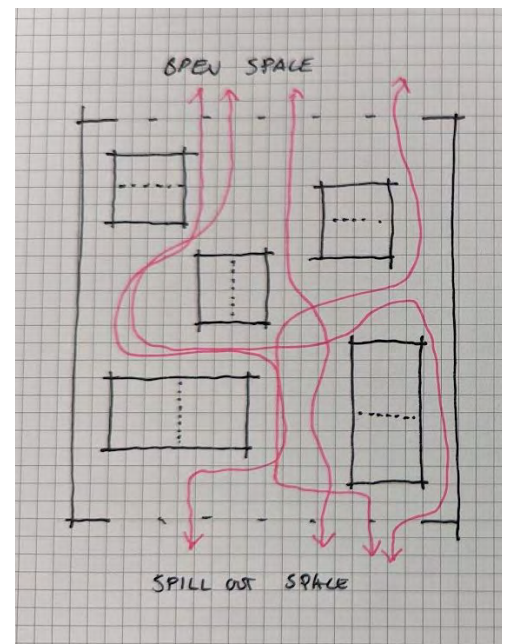
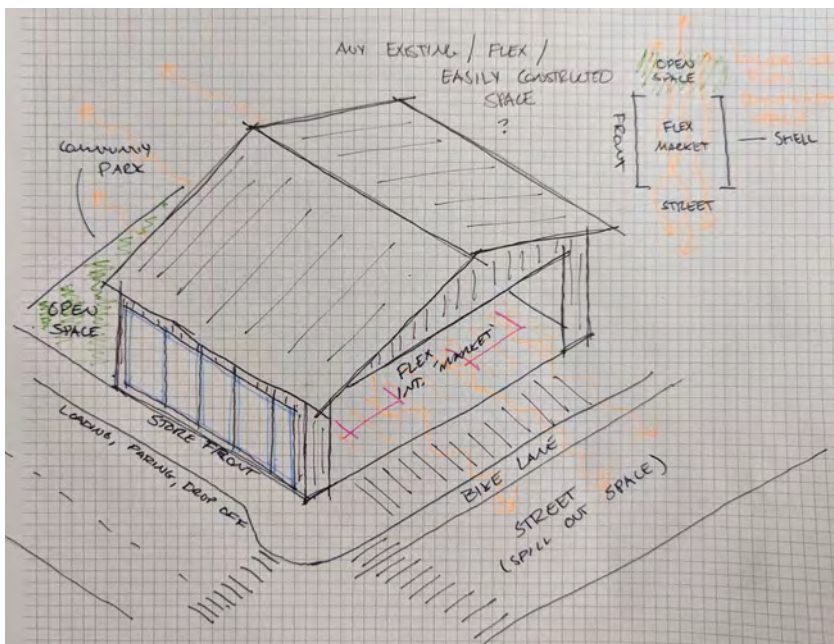
## Web Content Tactics

### Blog Posts

Copywriting	\$50/hour	12 hours	\$600
SMEs	\$75/hour	3 hours	\$225
total:			\$825

### Resilience Hub Web Page

Copywriting	\$50/hour	4 hours	\$200
Web Design	\$50/hour	1 hour	\$50
Tactic total:			\$250
Web Content total:			\$1075



Early project sketches

# Budget

## Community Engagement Tactics

### Community Engagement Guide

Copywriting	\$50/hour	10 hours	\$500
SMEs	\$75/hour	5 hours	\$425
Review with partners	\$200/hour	2 hours	\$400
			total: \$1325

### Conference Presentations

#### Content Prep

Copywriting	\$50/hour	5 hours	\$250
SMEs	\$75/hour	10 hours	\$700
Practice/Feedback	\$125/hour	2 hours	\$250
			Content total: \$1200

#### Attendance Costs

Airfare	\$500x2 tickets	x2 conferences*	\$2000
Lodging	\$200x2 nights	x2 conferences	\$800
Conference fees	\$500x2 tickets	x2 conferences	\$2000
			Attendance total: \$4800

Tactic total: \$6000

Community Engagement Total: \$7325

*Note: At the time of this writing, three top conferences have been identified. One is in Los Angeles, CA, one is local, and the third is remote.*



# Budget

Proposal Tactics			
Resilience Hub One-Sheet			
Copywriting	\$50/hour	10 hours	\$500
Design	\$50/hour	5 hours	\$250
Graphics creation	\$50/hour	40 hours	\$2000
Tactic total:			\$2750
Resilience Hub Pitch Deck			
Copywriting	\$50/hour	5 hours	\$250
Design	\$50/hour	5 hours	\$250
Tactic total:			\$500
Proposal Tactics total:			\$3250
Communications Plan Grand Total:			\$11,650

# Evaluation

The preceding tactics have detailed specific evaluation strategies to determine each tactic's success. The overall success of the effort will be reviewed in March 2024, one year after the project's launch.

It is recommended that each tactic is reviewed and progress is articulated every three months to ensure continued progress. Additionally, the team will track leads and resilience hub conversations throughout the year. After one year, the overall success will be reviewed and the plan will be adjusted and renewed as necessary. A structure for this evaluation can be found in the appendix.



## Tactic #1: Blog Posts

Are posts being viewed by the audiences?

Does the content create the awareness identified in the objectives?



## Tactic #4: Conference Presentations

Were proposals accepted and delivered?

Was the audience receptive?

Did the engagement increase awareness and/or lead to project opportunities?



## Tactic #2: Web Content

Are internal teams, peers, and the general public viewing the web page?

Does the content create awareness identified in objectives?



## Tactic #5: One-Sheet

How many proposals included this one-sheet? Won or lost?

What feedback did we get on proposals?



## Tactic #3 Community Engagement Guide

Did nonprofit partners engage with SERA on a resilience hub project?

Did the guide persuade partners to work with SERA on a resilience hub project?



## Tactic #6: Pitch Deck

How many times was the pitch deck presented?

Did those presentations lead to a project?

# Conclusion

With an established reputation for sustainability, and a talented staff of resilience planners, SERA is in a unique position to act on its community-focused values with a business venture that will create more resilient communities in Oregon, California, and Washington.

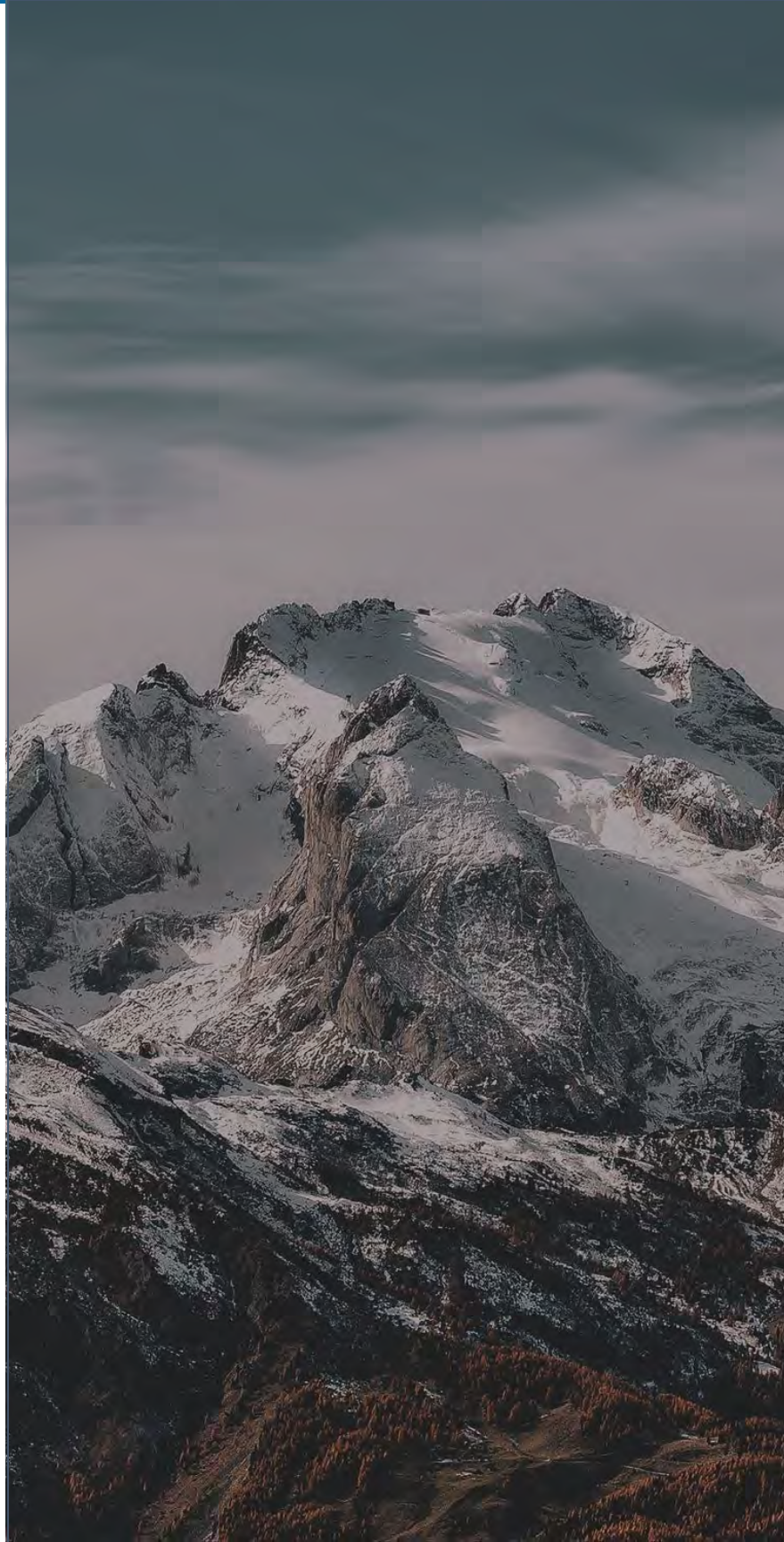
SERA was on the forefront of innovation when the world started talking about sustainability. Resilience is on the public's mind now and SERA has an opportunity to step in front early and lead.

This communications plan will share SERA's vision and establish the firm as a leader in resilience planning.

The climate crisis is becoming increasingly threatening and the evidence is all around us. Rising temperatures, extreme weather events, melting glaciers, and unprecedented wildfires serve as constant reminders of the damage and consequences we stand to suffer.

Though the reality is sobering, we possess the knowledge and innovation to create a more resilient world. SERA Architects, and the inspired resilience planners who have dedicated their professional lives to this effort have an opportunity, some might consider it a responsibility, to inspire clients, partners, and the public to act.

This communications plan is one way that SERA can contribute to creating a more resilient world.







# References & Appendix

References

Timeline

Partnership Opportunities

Resilience Hub Examples

Conference List

Community Engagement Best Practices

Sample One-Sheet





## Resources

Baja, K. (2018). Resilience Hubs: Shifting Power to Communities and Increasing Community Capacity. <http://resilience-hub.org>

Baker, S. M. (2009). Vulnerability and resilience in natural disasters: A marketing and public policy perspective. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 28(1), 114–123. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jppm.28.1.114>

Corner, A., & Randall, A. (2011). Selling climate change? the limitations of social marketing as a strategy for climate change public engagement. *Global Environmental Change*, 21(3), 1005–1014.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2011.05.002>

Drew, Laura. “Using Social Marketing to Increase Community Resilience.” *Journal of business continuity & emergency planning* 12.4 (2019): 354–367. Print.

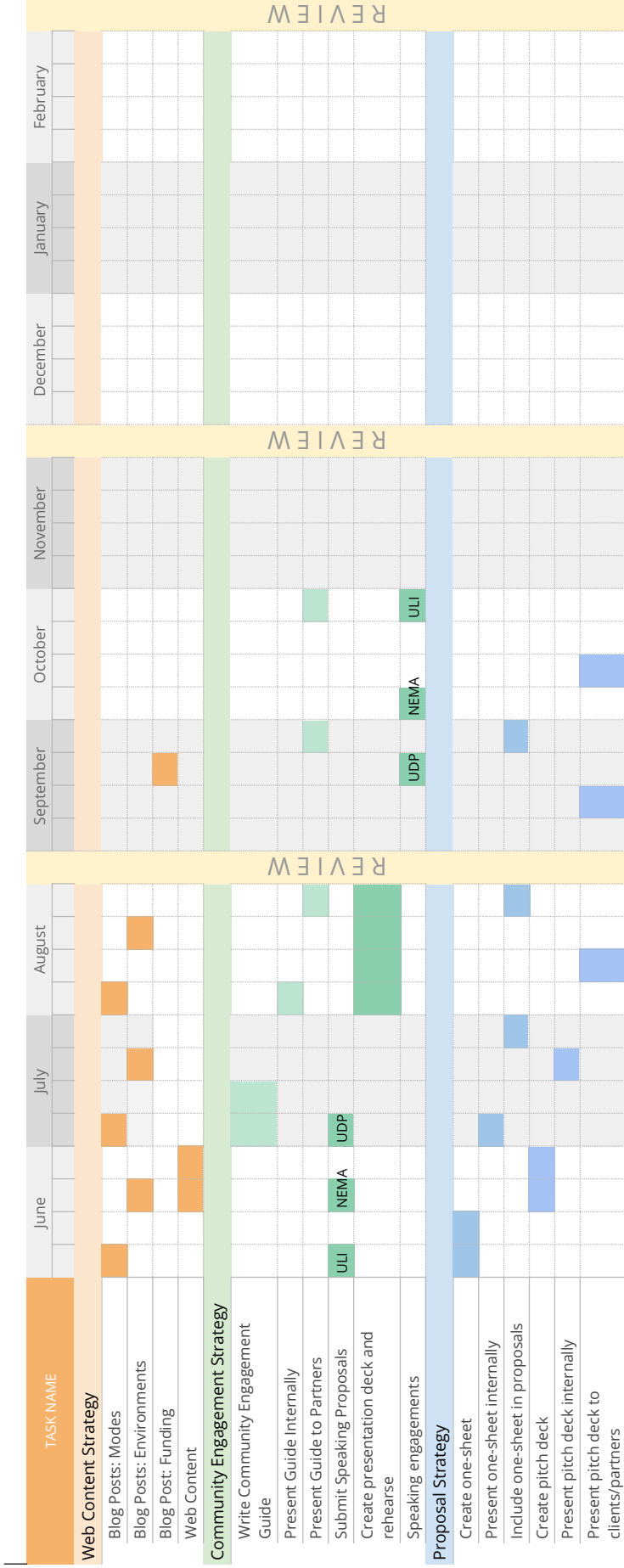
Hart, S. L. (2009). *Capitalism at the crossroads: Aligning business, Earth, and humanity*. Wharton School.

Leiserowitz, A., Mildenberger, M., Howe, P., Jefferson, M., Neyens, L., & Marlon, J. (2023, May 18). Yale climate opinion maps 2021. Yale Program on Climate Change Communication.  
<https://climatecommunication.yale.edu/visualizations-data/ycom-us/>

Lowrey, A. (2023, January 22). How did tech become America’s most troubled industry? *The Atlantic*.  
<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2023/01/tech-recession-layoffs-google-facebook-microsoft/672798/>

- Markley Rountree, M., & Koernig, S. K. (2014). Values-based education for sustainability marketers. *Journal of Marketing Education*, 37(1), 5–24. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0273475314559513>
- Meyer-Emerick, N. (2016). *Using Social Marketing for Public Emergency Preparedness: Social Change for Community resilience*. Routledge.
- Moser, S. C., & Dilling, L. (2004). Making climate hot. *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development*, 46(10), 32–46. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00139150409605820>
- Nisbet, M. C. (2009). Communicating climate change: Why frames matter for public engagement. *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development*, 51(2), 12–23. <https://doi.org/10.3200/envt.51.2.12-23>
- Ottman, J. (2017). *The new rules of Green Marketing: Strategies, tools, and inspiration for Sustainable Branding*. Routledge.
- Peattie, K. (1992). *Green marketing*. M & e handBooks.
- Peattie, Ken, Peattie, S., & Ponting, C. (2009). Climate change: A social and Commercial Marketing Communications Challenge. *EuroMed Journal of Business*, 4(3), 270–286. <https://doi.org/10.1108/14502190910992693>
- Rettie, R., Burchell, K., & Riley, D. (2012). Normalising green behaviours: A new approach to sustainability marketing. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 28(3–4), 420–444. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257x.2012.658840>
- Slovic, P., & Västfjäll, D. (2015). The more who die, the less we care psychic numbing and genocide. *Imagining Human Rights*, 55–68. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110376616-005>

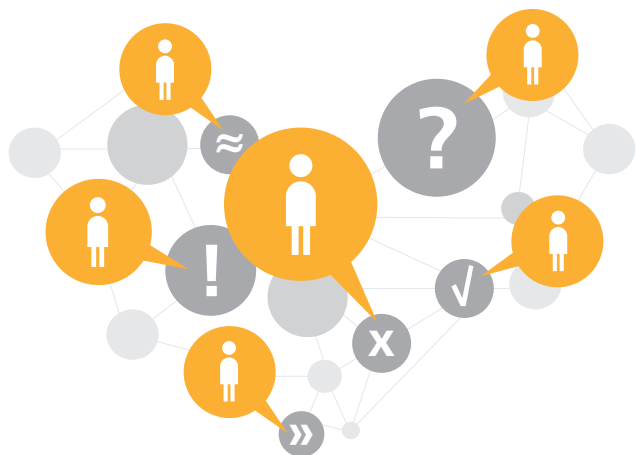
resilience hub comms plan gantt chart







Conference	Proposal due date	Event date	Location	Proposal	Notes:
<a href="#">OAPA 2023 Annual Planning Conference</a>	6/7/2023	10/25/2023	Eugene (online, but all speakers in person)		
APA California	rolling	1/1/2024	Fresno virtual		Speaking proposals are closed for this year. Can aim for next year. Proposals open January-March. 3rd Tuesday of the month; talk to Erin
<a href="#">Portland Urban Design Panel</a>	rolling				schedule is set, can't find submittal info, not sure this is a good fit
ICMA Annual Conference	submitted	9/20/2023	Austin	<a href="https://docs.google.com/">https://docs.google.com/</a>	Submitted. Will find out by mid-June.
UJL Fall Meeting		10/30/2023	Los Angeles		In addition to this event, call for proposals is rolling for online opportunities including webinars, live streaming, podcasts. <a href="https://oregoncountries.org/rolling-call-proposals/">https://oregoncountries.org/rolling-call-proposals/</a>
Association of Oregon Counties Living Future '24	6/30/2023 10/1/23 (based on last year)	11/14/2023 5/1/2024 (approximate)	Eugene		Many public events but not one conference. Seems like lots of good opportunities. Seems like we should attend some and go from there. <a href="#">This looks like a fantastic aligned virtual event.</a> <a href="https://www.spur.org/policy-area/sustainability-and-">https://www.spur.org/policy-area/sustainability-and-</a>
SPUR	rolling				



# Best Practices for Meaningful Community Engagement

*Tips for Engaging Historically Underrepresented Populations in Visioning and Planning*

The wider the variety of world views and lived experiences that inform a community visioning or planning process, the more likely it is that the built project or resulting plan will address the needs and opportunities of even the most vulnerable or most marginalized person in the community.

Meaningful community engagement can take shape in a variety of ways and requires time and flexibility. Building trusting relationships with people—and finding a variety of ways to enable their connection to a project, a process, or a group of people—requires sustained effort. Here are some tips to help strengthen the interpersonal connections across your community:

## Identify who is underrepresented at your meeting or event.

- Why do you define this particular population this way?
- How can this information guide your planning and outreach efforts?

## Put yourself in other people's shoes.

- What factors (besides meeting content) would guarantee your attendance?
- How might you eliminate common barriers to showing up?\*

## Listen more than you speak.

- Seek the perspective, expertise and lived experience of each person you meet.

## Gather input and buy-in on your project, its aims, and its marketing materials.

- Seek input from the groups you are actively trying to engage.
- Invest time in building relationships with grassroots community leaders who may serve as information conduits. Acknowledge their time and efforts explicitly.

## Address language barriers.

- Eliminate use of technical jargon and acronyms during meetings.
  - Define all new terminology on the white board, or in a glossary of terms, where everything is boiled down into easy-to-grasp language.
- Dedicate funds in your project budget for interpretation and translation services.
- Connect with community nonprofits and cultural groups to gather information:
  - What language(s) does your constituency speak? Is literacy an issue?
  - Who might you recommend to do translation into X language?  
Can you introduce me to that person?

---

### **Be thoughtful about location of meetings and events.**

- Can everyone get there easily via public transit, especially by bus?
- Is the location “neutral” or known to be the “turf” of a particular group?
- Is the venue familiar and accessible to everyone involved?

### **Get creative in defining what “engagement” looks and feels like.**

- Meetings are just one way of gathering people and exchanging information.
- Create a multitude of ways for people to get involved.
- Hands-on activities—a river cleanup or a playground build—get people working side-by-side, sharing an experience, meeting and speaking with one another.

### **Tap existing networks to spread the word.**

- Published public notices may follow the letter of the law, but they can never replace intentional outreach or one-to-one engagement.
- Word of mouth is time-tested and never goes out of style!
- Invest time in connecting with member organizations to multiply your reach.

### **Provide food and child care at all events.**

- Publicize these offerings in your outreach.
- Create ways for children to contribute and participate in the process, too.

### **Verbally and publicly acknowledge citizen distrust and historical patterns of decision making that is not reflective of previously gathered public input.**

- If you name it and own it, you set the tone for open conversation.
- Demonstrate you are willing to engage honestly and without hard feelings.

### **Manage expectations by being up front and honest.**

- Let participants know all the “non-negotiables” up front.
- Be transparent in describing your team’s roles and responsibilities, capacities and limitations, especially time and financial constraints.
- Don’t solicit input if there’s no opportunity to influence a decision already made!

### **Take time to establish “rules of engagement,” sourced from stakeholders in the room.**

- Build stakeholder ownership of the process from the beginning, and warm up the room and the voices within it.
- Establish shared culture and norms regarding expectations for participation, boundaries for folks who might take more “air time,” and permission for those who tend to say less in a group setting.

**Ensure your team’s manner and practice reflect core principles** of inclusiveness, equity, justice, reliability, respect, transparency, cultural competence, and active listening.

**Make it right** when something goes wrong. When receiving feedback about meeting format, or something said or unsaid, be gracious. Validate the concerns of the messenger, and make a verbal correction or acknowledgement in real time.

*\*See next page for Commonly Cited Reasons Why People Don’t Show Up.*

---

---

# Commonly Cited Reasons Why People Don't Show Up

## *Insights from the Field on Engaging Historically Underrepresented Groups in Visioning and Planning*

A key step in preparing to lead a community visioning and planning process, along with cultural competency training, includes educating yourself and your team about possible reasons why people don't show up at public meetings or participate in planning processes. Practitioners interviewed by the Groundwork USA team shared the following commonly cited reasons for not showing up:

- Lack of knowledge of the political system
- Previous negative community engagement experience
- Historical patterns of municipal decisions not reflecting community input, broken promises made by political candidates, or both, resulting in reinforced distrust of government and institutions
- Economic barriers; needing to focus on basic needs of self and family
- Not seeing one's own culture or identity reflected in meeting format or content
- Fear of being judged, unsafe, or unwelcome
- Transportation barriers
- Childcare needs
- Spiritual beliefs and practices
- Immigration status
- Meeting time or date does not consider work schedules, religious holidays, meal times, or other family needs

While not definitive, these perspectives are valid and should be taken into account when planning a meeting or gathering of any kind.





---

# Examining Who May Be Underrepresented and Why

## *Food for Thought from Practitioners Who've Been There*

Precise and intentional language is important when communicating with members of the public, and especially so in community visioning and planning work. From interviews the Groundwork USA team led with seasoned community organizers in creation of this tool, we define “hard-to-reach” populations as those groups or communities who experience social exclusion and disempowerment.

Engaging hard-to-reach populations requires a team to modify the activities it typically employs in its outreach, communications, or engagement strategy to connect with them—include:

- People whose preferred language is one other than English
- People with low levels of literacy
- Single parents or working parents
- People of color
- Immigrants
- Refugees
- People with disabilities
- Faith communities
- People who are LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning)
- Ex-offenders
- Individuals who are homeless
- Youth
- Elders

Keeping these populations in mind, to be able to reach into a neighborhood and connect with all kinds of people, the first questions a community engagement team should ask themselves and answer honestly are: “Why are particular segments of our community’s population frequently missing from planning or public process, and what will we do about it?”



## DIXIE FIRE RECOVERY PLAN | PLUMAS COUNTY, CA



In late Summer of 2021, the Dixie Fire ravaged Northern California, burning nearly 1 million acres of land and leveling towns throughout five counties including Indian Valley and beyond. Greenville, CA was one of the most heavily impacted areas, with approximately 75% of the town's structures destroyed by the fire. Its historic Main Street, central business district, and more than 600 homes burned in the fire. Even in communities where structural damage was minimal, impacts have been felt across the region, with substantial consequences for the timber and tourism industries that are the lifeblood of the regional economy. These impacts have been further exacerbated by the ongoing pandemic, rising construction costs, and a demand for labor that outpaces capacity across nearly every sector.

Working closely with a local nonprofit, the Dixie Fire Collaborative (DFC), SERA has been leading a consultant team through a community-based visioning and long-term recovery planning effort for a more resilient region. The core of this work to date has been facilitating a series of community conversations—listening to community members, government officials, and infrastructure representatives to help define community needs and identify the right processes to meet them. The team completed a resource flow mapping workshop, engaging community members in hands-on whole systems planning and design exercises. Topics included: re-visioning processes for forest management, timber, and housing construction; crafting more resilient infrastructure systems for water management and fire suppression; helping farmers and ranchers re-imagine the local and regional food system, and creating cultural hubs and centralized gathering spaces like community centers, breweries, restaurants, and art walks to enliven the downtown and local economy.



### Reference

Tyler Pew  
 Founding Principal, LMNOP Design  
 tyler@lmnopdesigninc.com  
 619.818.8118