

*Environmental Business Council of New England, Inc.
Sustainable Solutions Lab at the University of Massachusetts Boston*

Creating Connections Resilience and Equity in Transportation

Friday, November 20, 2020



Join us for Climate Cocktails!

Wednesday, December 2, 2020

A networking event hosted by the Climate Adaptation Forum

AGENDA

10:00 a.m. Welcome

- Kelly Knee, Forum Organizer
Executive Director – Ocean Science, RPS

Program Introduction

- Julie Eaton Ernst, Forum Co-Chair
Lead Resiliency Engineer, Weston & Sampson

10:15 a.m. Local Motives: Local transportation & equity initiatives

Moderator: Lauren Miller, Forum Co-Chair
Discipline Leader – Climate Resilience, CDM Smith

Panelists:

- Heidi Persaud, Director of Transportation Equity, CNT
- Ann Shikany, State and Federal Policy Advocate
Healthy People & Thriving Communities Program, NRDC
- Susanne Rasmussen, Director of Environmental and Transportation Planning
City of Cambridge, MA

11:30 a.m. Break

11:45 a.m. Keeping on the Right Track: Regional transportation infrastructure & equity initiatives

Moderator: Nasser Brahim, Forum Co-Chair
Senior Climate Resiliency Specialist, Woods Hole Group

- Porie Saikia-Eapen, FAIA FCIQB RIBA
Director, Environmental Sustainability and Compliance
Metropolitan Transportation Authority of the State of New York
- Hannah Lyons-Galante, Climate Change Resiliency Specialist
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)
- Allison Brooks, Executive Director, Bay Area Regional Collaborative

12:55 p.m. Adjourn – Closing Remarks

- Rebecca Herst, Forum Organizer; Director, Sustainable Solutions Lab
University of Massachusetts Boston

FORUM CO-CHAIRS

Nasser Brahim, Senior Climate Resiliency Specialist
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Mr. Brahim is a Senior Climate Resiliency Specialist at Woods Hole Group, an integrated coastal engineering, science, and technology firm. He helps build climate resilient coastal communities by developing and implementing vulnerability assessments, resiliency plans, and design and operational improvements. Mr. Brahim has played a leading role in efforts to build resilience in Metro Boston's transportation systems, including through the Massport Disaster and Infrastructure Resiliency Plan, Massport Critical Asset Resiliency Project, MassDOT Tunnel Adaptation Project, and MBTA Aquarium Station and Blue Line Egress Flood Protection Improvements Project. He has also led climate resiliency projects with municipalities, wastewater utilities, non-profit land conservancies, higher education institutions, and real estate property managers. His projects have earned numerous engineering, planning, and design awards and been covered by NPR, The Boston Globe, New York Times, The Washington Post, and PBS NewsHour. Mr. Brahim is an active board member of the Mystic River Watershed Association and a certified consultant under the Massachusetts Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program. He holds a Master of Environmental Management from Yale University and Bachelor of Arts from Florida International University.

Julie Eaton Ernst, Lead Resiliency Engineer
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Julie Eaton Ernst is a licensed professional engineer and is the lead resiliency engineer at Weston & Sampson. For over a decade, her professional and academic ventures have focused on looking at climate change resiliency and adaptation from policy and design perspectives. She specializes in applying climate projections in civil design practices and translating conceptual adaptation strategies into feasible engineered solutions. Julie was the project manager for the award-winning City of Boston Public Works Department's Climate Resilient Design Standards and Guidelines for Protection of Public Rights-of-way, MBTA Blue Line Aquarium Station Flood Vulnerability Assessment, and the Resilient Massachusetts Action Team (RMAT) Climate Resilience Design Standards and Guidelines project (on-going). Julie received a 2018 Ascending Leader Award from the Environmental Business Council (EBC) for her work in climate resilience and she is the vice co-chair of the EBC Climate Change and Air Committee. She is also a certified MVP Provider and has Bachelor's degrees in Political Science (University of Rochester) and Civil Engineering (UMass Lowell), and a Master's degree in Civil Engineering (UMass Lowell).

Rebecca Herst, Director, Sustainable Solutions Lab
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Rebecca Herst is the Director of the Sustainable Solutions Lab (SSL) at University of Massachusetts, Boston. SSL is a research center devoted to understanding the disproportionate impacts of climate change on marginalized communities and working with them to develop sustainable and equitable solutions. A former community organizer focusing on economic and racial justice issues, Rebecca transitioned into the climate adaptation field when she realized how disproportionately climate change is impacting low-income communities and communities of color. Before coming to UMass Boston, Rebecca worked on climate resilience at Boston Harbor Now, Harvard University's Office for Sustainability and the Urban Land Institute. Rebecca serves as an Agenda Setter for the Climigration network and is on the External Advisory Committee for the Metro Area Planning Council's MetroCommon 2050 process. She has a B.A. from Carleton College and an MBA from Boston University's Questrom School of Business.

Lauren Miller, Discipline Leader – Climate Resilience
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Ms. Miller specializes in climate change services, including climate change vulnerability assessments, resiliency and adaptation plans. As CDM Smith's Climate Resilience Discipline Leader, she leads the planning and implementation of climate resilience services, working with a cross-disciplinary team. She has served as the technical lead on climate change related projects throughout the United States and internationally in her 16 years of experience – including the recent Passaic River Basin Climate Resilience Planning Study for the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority. She is trained in the Community Resilience Building facilitation process through the Massachusetts Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) program and certified by the American Water Works Association Utility Risk & Resilience to facilitate utility's compliance with the America's Water Infrastructure Act. For the past decade, she has volunteered on Cambridge's Climate Protection Action Committee, serving as chair for three years. In 2019, she was appointed to the Cambridge Climate Resilience Zoning Task Force. Ms. Miller has a B.S. in Environmental Studies from Elon University and an M.A. in Energy and Environmental Analysis from Boston University.

SPEAKERS

Allison Brooks, Executive Director
Bay Area Regional Collaborative
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Allison Brooks is Executive Director of Bay Area Regional Collaborative (barc.ca.gov) a consortium of regional agencies and regionally-oriented state agencies in the San Francisco Bay Area focused on addressing issues of regional significance at the intersection of land use, transportation, energy, climate change and social and racial equity. Prior to joining BARC, Allison led the national organization Reconnecting America a national research and policy organization focused on advancing equitable transit-oriented development (TOD) in metro areas across the US and across federal agencies. She also led the Livable Communities Initiative at the East Bay Community Foundation where she founded a national model of non-profit, philanthropic and public sector partnership called the Great Communities Collaborative to support equitable TOD across the Bay Area. Allison has a BA in Political Science from the University of California, San Diego and a Masters in Sustainable International Development from the Heller Graduate School of Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University. She served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Ghana, West Africa.

Hannah Lyons-Galante, Climate Change Resiliency Specialist
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)
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Hannah Lyons-Galante currently serves at the Climate Change Resiliency Specialist for the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. Her work focuses on conducting vulnerability assessments, providing guidance to engineers, and developing policies & procedures to get climate change adaptation efforts adopted throughout the organization. Prior to joining the MBTA, Hannah earned her Masters in Landscape Architecture from the Harvard Graduate School of Design. Her graduate work focused primarily on designing public open spaces, using ecology to inform plantings and stormwater management design. In the years prior to earning her masters, Hannah taught high school science, conducted an open space mapping project with Mass Audubon, and from fieldwork conducted entirely in Spanish, published original research on tropical dry forests. With an undergraduate degree in Environmental Science and Public Policy from Harvard College (BA 2012), Hannah aspires to bridge the worlds of ecology and design to create more resilient & robust public transportation in Massachusetts.

Heidy Persaud, Director of Transportation Equity
CNT
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Heidy Persaud joined CNT to implement the agency's work on transportation with a multidisciplinary and equitable focus. She currently leads CNT's work to advance transportation equity, including project management, program development, convening of partner organizations, and advocacy. Prior to CNT, Heidy worked in urban planning and community development at Teska Associates, Inc., the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, and the Chicago Transit Authority (RPM) providing assistance to communities across the Chicago metropolitan area through plan-making, community outreach, transportation/construction, and implementation.

Susanne Rasmussen, Director, Environmental and Transportation Planning Division
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Susanne Rasmussen is director of the Environmental and Transportation Planning Division in the Cambridge Community Development Department and has more than 25 years of experience in the implementation of environmental policies and programs. She is responsible for climate change mitigation and resiliency planning including engaging residents and business in this effort. She oversees the development of new energy and transportation policies and implementation of a variety of programs and projects in the areas of energy efficiency, renewable energy, preparedness planning, multi-modal infrastructure, mobility as a service and transportation demand management. Prior to joining the City of Cambridge Ms. Rasmussen was a senior manager for a non-profit energy service company and a land use planner in a major metropolitan city. Ms. Rasmussen has a master's degree in City Planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a master's in Civil Engineering and Planning from the University of Aalborg in Denmark.

Porie Saikia-Eapen, FAIA FCIQB RIBA, Director, Environmental Sustainability and Compliance
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Porie Saikia is a Registered Architect/USA, Chartered Architect/UK, Chartered Construction Manager/UK, and a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Building. Her advocacy for a sustainable built environment is reflected in the various positions she has held in the industry both in the government and the private sector.

Currently as the Director, Environmental Sustainability and Compliance at the MTA NY, she is responsible for taking forward the vision for Environmentally Sustainable MTA across its five agencies, developing strategies for Renewable Energy, GHG Reduction and Energy Efficiency, incorporating long-term sustainability goals, anticipating trends in industry, technology, society, and legislative & regulatory practices.

Ann Shikany, State and Federal Policy Advocate
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Ann Shikany is an infrastructure-investment expert and advocate, having spent her career working to enhance transportation and clean energy investments at federal, state, and local levels. At NRDC, she advocates for low-carbon transportation solutions at the federal and state levels and serves as a member of the ACCC transportation team—developing peer-to-peer learning opportunities and driving critical transportation interventions across the 25 city challenge winners. Before joining NRDC in 2018, Shikany served in the Portland Bureau of Transportation in Oregon, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and the U.S. Department of Energy. Her policy background includes infrastructure finance, congestion pricing, autonomous-vehicle policy and regulation, and women's economic empowerment. She holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Kenyon College and a master's in international relations with concentrations in international finance, economics, and energy from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies. Shikany is based in NRDC's Washington, D.C., office.