

CLIMATE ADAPTATION FORUM

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

We Need to Talk What if Staying is No Longer an Option?

Friday, December 12, 2025

Hosted by:

Foley Hoag LLP
155 Seaport Boulevard
Boston MA 02210

and

Streaming virtually on Zoom

Sponsors of the 2025-2026 Climate Adaptation Forum programming:



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AGENDA

- 9:00 a.m. **Registration & Networking**
- 9:30 a.m. **Welcome**
- Gabriela Boscio Santos, Forum Organizer
Associate Director, Sustainable Solutions Lab
University of Massachusetts Boston
- Welcome from Sponsor of the Virtual Presentation**
- Indrani Gosh, Climate Adaptation Forum Steering Committee
Resiliency Practice Leader, Weston & Sampson
- Welcome from Host & Access Sponsor**
- Aaron Lang, Partner, Foley Hoag LLP
- Program Introduction**
- Van Du, Forum Co-Chair; Director, Environmental Planning
Metropolitan Area Planning Council
- 9:50 a.m. **Governing Land on a Dynamic Earth**
- Linda Shi, Associate Professor, Director, Master of Regional Planning Program
Cornell University
- 10:25 a.m. **Break**
- 10:35 a.m. **Managed Retreat Scenario Planning Exercise – Three Horizons Activity**
- Exercise Facilitator**
- Kathryn Davies, Assistant Teaching Professor
Urban & Environmental Policy & Planning, Tufts University
- Overview of Exercise**
- 10:50 am. **Three Horizons Activity**
- 11:35 a.m. **Break**
- 11:45 a.m. **Gallery Walk – *in-person attendees***
- Networking Break (Optional) – *virtual attendees***
- 12:00 p.m. **Reflections & Debrief**
- Kathryn Davies, Tufts University
 - Linda Shi, Cornell University
- 12:30 p.m. **Adjourn**
- Closing Remarks**
- Ann Gisinger, Forum Organizer
Executive Director, Environmental Business Council of New England

FORUM CO-CHAIRS

Van Du, Director, Environmental Planning
Metropolitan Area Planning Council
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In her role as Director of Environmental Planning, Van manages MAPC's environmental and climate resilience programs. She currently oversees MAPC's Accelerating Climate Resilience grant program, Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness projects, the Climate Resilience Playbook, the Barr Foundation climate resilience program, environmental projects under the MAPC Technical Assistance Program, as well as climate-focused projects in collaboration with state agencies, including the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA), the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Van has 15+ years of professional experience supporting local governments, private sector climates as well as higher education institutions with sustainability and climate planning services. She holds a Master's in City Planning and Urban Affairs from Boston University with a focus on urban sustainability, and Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies from Bowdoin College. Van is a certified Envision Sustainability Professional (ENV SP).

Kari Hewitt, Lecturer, Urban & Environmental Policy & Planning
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Kari is a climate resilience practitioner and an adjunct Lecturer at Tufts University Department of Urban & Environmental Policy & Planning (UEP). Kari has 17 years of experience working in the sustainability and resilience field across public, private, institutional, and non-profit sectors. For more than a decade, she has worked as a consultant leading climate action, sustainability, and resiliency plans for municipalities and other public entities. Since 2020, she has also been an instructor at Tufts UEP, teaching courses related to sustainability, decarbonization, and resiliency as well as co-leading a Field Projects course connecting student researchers with community partners. She believes in centering equity, justice, and liberation into all aspects of her work and views her own and others' journeys in understanding systems of privilege and oppression as critical to our collective action on climate change. Kari is also a member of the Board of Directors for New Ecology, Inc, a national non-profit delivering sustainability solutions at the community level. She holds an M.A. in Urban & Environmental Policy & Planning from Tufts University and a B.A. in Sociology from Smith College.

Julie Wormser, Chief Climate Officer
City of Cambridge
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On October 1, 2024, Julie Wormser became the first ever Chief Climate Officer of the City of Cambridge, Massachusetts. Prior to this role, Julie was the Mystic River Watershed Association's Senior Policy Advisor and founder of the Resilient Mystic Collaborative. Since its launch in September 2018, the RMC has grown to include 20 municipalities and has secured over \$30 million in funding to pursue regional climate preparedness projects. As Executive Director of The Boston Harbor Association, Wormser was instrumental in drawing attention to Boston's need to prepare for coastal flooding from extreme storms and sea level rise. She coauthored Preparing for the Rising Tide and Designing With Water and co-led the Boston Living with Water international design competition with the City of Boston and Boston Society of Architects. She has a BA in biology from Swarthmore College and an MPA from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government.

SPEAKER

Linda Shi, Associate Professor; Director, Master of Regional Planning Program
Cornell University
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Linda Shi is an associate professor in the Department of City and Regional Planning. Her research concerns how to plan for urban climate adaptation in ways that improve environmental sustainability and social justice. She studies how aspects of urban land governance — including the fiscalization of land use, property rights regimes, and metropolitan regional institutions — shape climate vulnerability and adaptation responses. An urban environmental planner by training, Shi has worked for AECOM, the Institute for International Urban Development, and the Rocky Mountain Institute and consulted for the World Bank and American Institute of Architects on projects and research in the U.S., Asia, Latin America, and Africa. Shi received a Ph.D. in urban and regional planning from MIT's Department of Urban Studies and Planning, a master's in urban planning from Harvard GSD, and a bachelor's and master's in environmental management from Yale University.

EXERCISE FACILITATOR

Kathryn Davies, Assistant Teaching Professor, Urban & Environmental Policy & Planning
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Kate's work focuses on navigating equitable transformations to sustainability using a range of collaborative and participatory methods. Recent projects include developing serious games to address air quality challenges in the Salt Lake Valley and using scenario planning techniques to improve cumulative effects management in Aotearoa New Zealand's coastal and marine areas. Kate has also worked with the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) to develop scenarios that inform global and regional biodiversity and ecosystem service assessments. Through the co-production of knowledge and practice, these projects aim to improve social and ecological outcomes and enhance the resilience of communities by supporting individuals and institutions to grapple with environmental change across interests and scales.

Prior to joining UEP, Kate has worked as a social scientist for the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA) in Aotearoa New Zealand, an urban planner in Salt Lake City, and a Research Assistant Professor in Geography at the University of Utah. She holds a Ph.D. in Environmental Science from the University of Auckland and a B.A. in Environmental Studies from Oberlin College.

STUDENT FACILITATORS

Kelsey Arrington-Podraza, Student, Master of Science in Sustainability
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Kelsey Arrington-Podraza (she/her) is a first-year student in the MS in Sustainability program in the Department of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning. Originally from New Jersey, she spent most of her adult life in the Philadelphia area, where she completed her BS in Urban and Environmental Studies with a minor in Applied Community Sustainability at West Chester University. When she's not working, Kelsey works in climate justice as a program manager. She is also a RYT-200 yoga instructor who offers donation-based community classes. In her free time, she enjoys spending time outdoors with her dog, Birdie, intellectualizing reality tv with her friends, and starting (but not finishing) creative projects.

Ashanee Kottage, Student, Master of Science in Sustainability
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Ashanee Kottage is a theater maker, poet, and scholar from Colombo, Sri Lanka, and the founder of Kavaya Press— an artist collective and sustainable publishing home for writers of the Global Majority responding to their environments.

Her debut poetry collection *Sand & Sweat* traces a coming-of-age across continents, while her academic scholarship explores the journey of coming-of-place. With a degree from Georgetown's School of Foreign Service and a Master's in progress at Tufts in Sustainability, Ashanee approaches community gatherings and art making as both city-scale advocacy and national diplomacy. She is currently based between Boston and Colombo, working on her first film, *Lunu Rekha*, a meditation on tourism's impact on the south coast of Sri Lanka.