



Briefing Transcript

Community-Centered Resilience: Lessons from Louisiana

<https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/110619lasafe>

November 2019

Speakers:

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Moderator:

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Daniel Bresette

Alright we'll go ahead and get started, good morning everyone, or no, good afternoon everyone, sorry it's not the West Coast, good afternoon everyone, thank you very much, let me start by saying thank you very much to our hosts today, representative Cedric Richmond, and we are joined by our friend Chyna in his office, and she's nice enough to say a few words to welcome us all here today. Thank you, Chyna.

Chyna Melton

Good afternoon everyone, thank you for being here, and thank you to our panelists and on behalf of Congressman Richmond we would like to thank you all, it's gonna be very informational, I hope you enjoy their time here, thank you.

Bresette

Thank you very much. Thanks for joining us, today we're gonna learn today about community-centered resilience efforts underway in Louisiana, and we really have a terrific panel today, not just in terms of substance but I've spent most of today with most of them, and there's a wonderful chemistry on this panel and so I'm really really looking forward to the interplay that I've seen in some meetings that we've had this morning. It's a great way to learn about this LA Safe effort and all of the different facets, and we especially appreciate their willingness to travel from Louisiana. These are community-based resilience experts and we're really fortunate to have them with us today. For those of you new to EESI, we were founded in 1984 on a bipartisan basis by members of Congress to help educate and inform policymakers, stakeholders, and the general public about the benefits of a

low emissions economy. In 1988 EESI declared that addressing climate change is a moral imperative, a sentiment that has since guided our work.

Today, we are fully engaged in the climate change policy debate and committed to working with Congress to find solutions to what I call the terrible problem of a rapidly warming planet. Lately, EESI has been increasingly focused on the issues of resilience, and a great way to learn about resilience is to see it and hear about it in action at the community level, where its impacts are most immediately felt. We're looking all across the United States for resilience stories to tell, and today we're focusing on Louisiana, but if you want to learn more about other regions, well good luck for you because you can find summaries as well as videos of past briefings on different areas of the country at EESI.org.

When we read or hear about the effects of climate change, very often it follows or is accompanied by video footage of extreme weather: hurricanes, flooding, scorched plains, tornadoes and the like, and this is reflected in how we talk about it. Just the other day at an EESI briefing about a new report from the Global Commission on Adaptation, I fell into that trap. I talked about more frequent and destructive storms, and then of course when we talk about post-event recovery efforts, we often envision long lines of utility trucks and FEMA trailers, big mobilizations of resources that are more reminiscent of a major military buildup than anything we would normally want to see moving through our communities. Yes, climate change is a cause of these more frequent and destructive storms, but it's also more insidious than that. It creeps up on us slowly, inch by inch in sea level rise, fraction of a degree Fahrenheit by fraction of a degree. Being resilient in the face of climate change needs a lot more than just long lines of trucks after big storms. To be really resilient, our communities have to be better equipped than ever before to deal with the problems and challenges of climate change every day, regardless of whether a governor issues a disaster declaration or sends in the National Guard, or an appropriation supplemental is on the House floor to rebuild infrastructure and help get people's lives back on track. Resilience requires vigilance every day and to have resilience, our communities have to be fully engaged, they are literally the front lines, and they're also the first resources people depend on in the face of a storm or other climate change event.

And today, we're going to hear about the community-based resilience efforts in Louisiana from today's panel. We're gonna leave plenty of time at the end for questions, so please hold your questions until then, and we're going to go ahead and get right started. We're gonna begin with, we mixed up the order and I didn't have that, we're gonna begin with my friend Matt Sanders, he's the Resilience Program and Policy Administrator for the state of Louisiana's Office of Community Development. Louisiana received a \$92.6 million award in conjunction with the HUD-funded National Disaster Resilience Competition, including \$40 million to support its resilience policy framework. Louisiana's strategic adaptations for future environments, or LA Safe, and a \$48.3 million award to resettle, and this is where my Louisiana pronunciation will leave a lot to be desired but I'm gonna try really hard, the Ile de Jean Charles community in Terrebonne Parish. Matthew was the state's intergovernmental lead for its NRDC application and is currently the principal in the development of both awarded projects. So with that Matt, I'll turn the microphone over to you and I look forward to your presentation, thanks.

Matt Sanders

Thank you everyone, it's truly a pleasure to be here today and to have the opportunity to address you all.. wait oh, there's the beginning of our slides. So I'll just lay a little context and groundwork before we really dive into what LA Safe has been. So it's probably not a news flash to anyone in the room to learn that Louisiana is an extremely disaster-prone state, the imagery that I'm displaying here is all of the hurricane tracks from 1854 to present, there is a state under there somewhere, I promise. And just to further illustrate that reality, the Office of Community Development that I represent, we have a 17 billion dollar Community Development Block Grant portfolio emanating from Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav, Ike, Isaac, and to cloudburst rain events in 2016. We understand that some of that risk, specifically our search flood risk, correlates with a land loss condition in the state of Louisiana, so we suffer from relative sea level rise, seas rise, the land sinks, and so we have an enhanced effect in Louisiana compared to other places. Just to highlight what that looks like, in 1960 we had this really nicely defined shape of Louisiana, we call ourselves the boot. As we move forward to 2017 that boot is no longer, it's this skeletal condition that you see here. And as we move out, projecting 50 years we would expect to lose more land over that period of time. Now the green that you see here, it represents projects from our state's Coastal Master Plan, which is you know truly, I think a groundbreaking effort on behalf of the state to directly correlate our

propensity to experience disasters with our land loss condition, and so that's a series of large-scale restoration efforts and structural risk reduction projects.

But the basis of this effort, LA Safe is the output of all of those efforts from the Coastal Master Plan, so if we understand that the Coastal Master Plan is limited in what can be restored at least over a 50 year time frame then we need to think from a planning perspective about land uses and development patterns, reflecting the reality that we're anticipating. Obviously, as we lose land that correlates with specifically search flood risk, so the easy way to read this map is the darker the blue the more prone you would be in a 100-year event, and so if our condition today is somewhat dire, reflective of the disasters that we have been subject to in Louisiana, as we project out the next 50 years even with the Master Plan, we would expect that condition to get worse, at least in some of our coastal communities. Just to highlight what we're facing in Louisiana, so there are a few hotspots for repetitive loss properties in the United States, obviously the Louisiana coast, Miami area, New York, New Jersey, but if you think about the population density of the of those other locations places like Miami, places like the New York metropolitan area, compared to the relatively low density area that is coastal Louisiana, I think it lays out a stark contrast that on a per capita basis we're experiencing a lot more flooding than other places. And as we've experienced those flooding events, our population has already started to react right, so we've been able to chart population losses and our most vulnerable environments, and as those population losses have taken place along our coast, median incomes have also declined precipitously. So there's a social aspect to how people are reacting to disaster risk, in that you know, those that have the financial ability to move somewhere higher and drier in many cases are taking up that opportunity, while those that don't have the same opportunity are unfortunately subject to a higher degree of risk by virtue of where they live.

So that leads me to LA Safe. So, this was funded by the National Disaster Resilience Competition, as Dan mentioned, and it focused on a six parish area in Louisiana. Now we think this six parish area was a pretty good target area to roll out this concept. Prior to Harvey and Maria in 2017, we calculated that this six parish area, which is exclusive of Orleans Parish, had represented eight and a half percent of all historic payouts through the National Flood Insurance Program. So we thought this would be a good place to work and roll out an idea that says well how do we think about a future land-use pattern and how do we think about future development based on what we know and the conditions that are currently on the ground? So as we approach the public with this idea we wanted to launch this regional planning effort, we wanted to emphasize the fact that we were going to work together right, and so government does some things well, we have good ideas but without that interaction, without a feedback loop between government and the grassroots, we really didn't feel like we could gain traction, and I think that ultimately got proven correct as some of my fellow panelists will talk about later. This was an effort that encompassed 71 different public outreach events and more than 2,800 individual participants, so this doesn't count people that showed up to more than one event, and the promise that we made to the public was to say look, we're going to lay out the information that we have at our disposal and we're going to work with you to develop policy proposals, planning efforts, and projects, reflective of the input that we get from you. And we're going to keep going back to you over and over again, and ask you whether or not the work that we're doing validates the information that you've provided us, and how do we continue to build on that information over a period of time. So it took us a year just going through the public outreach and engagement process in building out the concepts that ultimately became a final plan.

About halfway through that outreach and engagement effort, we put together what we refer to as our crowd-sourced land-use plan, and so this came from the public directly based on solely the mapping of disaster flood risk now and into the future, and so what what this really illustrated for us is that the public is super smart, and just laying out risk as we knew it to the highest degree possible, we asked the public to tell us how we should use land now and in the future, and it ended up being a really intelligent articulation of what a land-use map should look like. I am a planner by profession and I couldn't have done a better job than what the public did, but that was really a watershed moment for us to understand that with the benefit of good information, the public is really, really smart. So from there, we kept going back to the public over and over again and we continued to refine these concepts, continue to refine from a land-use perspective, from a development perspective, what the current and future incarnation of our communities should look like, and as we continue to refine those ideas over time and through multiple rounds and getting more input and refinement, we finally landed on a series of project proposals. Now once we got to this point in terms of how we decided what we were ultimately gonna make investments in, you know from the state's perspective we didn't really care what we ultimately funded because all

of the ideas were relevant, they were all good, and when it came down to it we just went back to the public itself and asked the public directly what should we invest in as a state. Now, I think this is really important to highlight because you know, as a planner I will tell you and you probably know this in your own right, a lot of plans are developed and ended up collecting dust on shelves, right, and so the ability to connect a public planning effort with the promise of project investment at the end based on that effort was really a catalyst for people to get involved and support the project itself.

So we ultimately are now investing in 10 separate projects that came from the LA Safe effort, and they all match concepts that were then evolved into ideas and tangible project proposals through that year long process of outreach and engagement. Along with the ten projects, I just want to make sure that I highlight the thing that I think is really interesting. So we developed final planning documents, one for each of the six parishes, and then a final document for taking a regional approach, all of the concepts and best practices that we developed throughout the planning effort, and it started to highlight from a macro perspective how we need to think about development in Louisiana, right. So there's this little small purple thing kind of on the bottom of that map on the right, that's Port Fourchon, it's one of the biggest LNG terminals in the country, that's a facility that really has to survive at least in the present day condition for Louisiana's economy. But if that's a facility that we need to maintain access to, how do we think about the supply chain, how do we think about where people live to commute to that facility, and that was really a conversation that we wanted to effectuate through this process. Conversely, in some of those areas that are higher, drier, better protected by their very nature per their location, we wanted to ask the community how should we think about future development opportunity in these places that are not yet developed out, right, and so to start that process early on knowing the population, they're already moving to our high ground areas in Louisiana, I think has been really effective for us to get a lot of interest from the public. Like I said we finished this planning effort earlier this year, we released plans in April, we've got a couple of copies here and they're all available online if you're interested to review the findings. Thank you very much.

Bresette

Thanks, Matt. Can I ask a quick follow-up question on one of your slides? You had little coins with a 0 a 1 or a 2, what are those?

Sanders

Yeah we kind of developed a voting system by which people that came to our last round of outreach and engagement, they could illustrate their preferences for the projects and they could rank them 1 2 and 3, and so we were able to compile their preferences through that different effort and ultimately make funding decisions.

Bresette

And that's what the tubes were, okay, that's cool. Our next panelist is Liz Russell. Liz manages the development and implementation of strategies to support communities and economies influenced by land loss and relative sea-level rise across coastal Louisiana. With a background and training in architectural design, landscape systems, and urban planning, Liz incorporates the complexities of the developed urban ecosystem to promote equitable opportunities in areas altered and affected by land change. Liz directs the activities of the foundation for Louisiana's Coastal Resilience Leverage Fund, managing coastal grant-making areas with community-based advisors, allies, and relevant partners while improving and increasing opportunities for regional collaboration. Thank you, Liz.

Liz Russell

Good afternoon, thank you all so much for being here, for taking the time to be part of this conversation. As Dan mentioned I'm Liz Russell, I manage the Climate Justice Portfolio at Foundation for Louisiana. We are a statewide philanthropic intermediary that initially was founded in the days following Hurricane Katrina, and meant to be a resource that could pull in resources from a diverse set of spaces and get them out to support communities on the ground most impacted by that disaster. Within the context of this specific portfolio, our work has always been grounded in what frontline community experience looks like with an understanding that existing inequities are exacerbated by any climate event and by often our institutionalized responses to them.

So our involvement in this work goes back to 2015, where we had some specific funding to ensure that frontline communities most impacted by sea level rise and by land loss and by climate change more broadly. Actually we're key designers and decision-makers from point zero in planning processes and in project selection to actually invest, to adapt to them. In that process, we were really always hearing from our community partners. Look by the time we see a plan, all of the decisions have already been made outside of our community, and they're brought to us for sort of an up-or-down feedback that may or may not be considered. We also heard trends of 'look I had to evacuate for Hurricane Katrina and I couldn't come back to my house for four months, by the time I got back my employer had found an employee from elsewhere.' And so how do we think about coastal land loss and restoration, and also think about our economy and our job access at the same time? How do we think about the reality that we see residents with resources picking up and moving, and that those changes impact everything else we care about. As our tax bases shift, we also see declines in ability to provide social services such as education or health care, we see inability in some of our parishes to maintain existing infrastructure, much less to invest in new infrastructure required to reduce our flood risk over time. So, these challenges in Louisiana had, before the LA Safe process, really been viewed as environmental. How do we think about wetland restoration? When in actuality those environmental challenges and opportunities spread into every other sector, every other thing that our communities, our constituents, our family, our friends, our neighbors, our colleagues know and love.

So what does it actually look like to center that community voice, is part of this process that we're speaking about today. So LA Safe would not have been possible without bringing together a wide array of public, private, philanthropic, nonprofit, and community partners, this was led as an initiative co-funded and co-managed by the Foundation for Louisiana and Office of Community Development, but would not have been possible without the many organizations you see on this slide, as well as the many other hundreds of residents that chose to engage in this process. Before we actually designed and launched this planning process, one of the things that we said when we heard this, I don't want to see a plan after the decisions have been made, is what would it actually look like to bring folks together from point zero to design a planning process together? Logistically, what does that look like in terms of the content, what does that look like? So logistically, obviously we talked about how many meetings do you have, are those meetings at a parish-wide scale, are they at a community scale, are they regional, how do we think about barriers that keep people out? So we've provided child care and transportation, food that folks liked, we thought about the literacy rates and language barriers and the technical nature of flood risk information. All of the meeting materials were designed to be used for a fifth-grade reading level, conscious of where our constituents can be and where the barriers to actually being a part of design and decision-making processes actually show up. Most critically, we also talked openly about the reality that people don't want to hear information about whether their communities will exist or not, from people from outside of their community, and I want to be clear and underscore some of the maps that Matt showed, with the 2017 Coastal Master Plan which is the third Coastal Master Plan in Louisiana to have been unanimously passed through our state legislature, it's the first time that we have openly admitted that we don't expect to build land more quickly than we're losing it, right. It's the first time that we have openly as a state said there are some communities that are here now that may not be here ten years from now, or 25 years from now, and 50 years from now. And so having those conversations was tough right, that shouldn't probably be held by somebody who is not from that area, and that's what we heard from our constituents and our resident leaders and partners, is we want to hear this information and discuss this information with people we know and trust.

Which brings me into one of the most pivotal early stage parts of this process, our Lead the Coast Program. The Foundation for Louisiana launched this program prior to the launching of LA Safe, it is essentially a four Saturday leadership and development program over the course of those four Saturdays, and includes coastal and climate 101, how did we get here, race, power, and privilege, who are the government players that are involved and what do they actually do, when do I go to FEMA, when do I go to OCD, when do I go to my local parish planning office? It also includes facilitation training, organizing training, and advocacy training. So by the time we've launched the planning process of LA Safe in March of 2017, we had three cohorts of Lead the Coast graduates. We then partnered with BISCO later on that year, and you'll hear from Elder Donald shortly, to actually run that program more deeply in community and in partnership with community-based organizations. The graduates of the Lead the Coast program were then eligible to be facilitators of the public meetings. Foundation for Louisiana was able to provide stipends of \$15 an hour and include transportation costs for those graduates to

actually be the holders of the conversation, so when you get into our second or third round of meetings out of that five that Matt showed, where you're talking about ten years from now, maybe we're thinking about ourselves in the room ten years from now, but 25 years from now, most of us are gonna be thinking about our kids, or our grandkids. 50 years from now, which is the planning horizon of our Coastal Master Plan, most of us in the room are not thinking about ourselves, we're thinking about our kids and our grandkids and the generations that come after us. And when it comes to conversations around the realities of land loss and the realities of some of the most catastrophic changes that we are already seeing and expect to continue to see, and we use that conversation as a way to sort of back in to the toughest parts of the dialogue. But the Lead the Coast graduates and all of our community partners really made this possible. Foundation for Louisiana was able to provide grants to individual community based partners to do outreach or engagement work, we were able to support different types of involvement, where organizations felt like they could show up, and so that meant that these conversations were not just being had at government meetings, but that they were being had in communities, they were being had around dinner tables, they were being had at Sunday brunches, and so that's something really important to come back to.

You also see in this slide those tubes again, the question about the voting. Matt mentioned at the start of this process, we went around to get essentially the blessings to work in each parish and we met with all of our elected officials, we met with senior leadership, and we spoke about this process will be one that invests in a project in your community and we don't already have those projects, we want to design that with you. And that was really important to get focus to play ball. I would say at the same time, that \$40 million bucket was also really important from my perspective, you know, a five to seven million dollar project range is enough to get people to care, but maybe not enough to incite political arm-twisting that might begin to encourage where that money might flow. So this voting process not only did we have these tubes with the coins and we had them wrapped for the entire meeting and it was a big reveal, this is what you see in that middle right picture at the end of the meeting, the big reveal at the end of the meeting, we also had an online portal that was active for three weeks after that meeting where residents who weren't able to come to the meeting could get online and indicate their preference.

So you know we are a foundation right, we are a statewide philanthropic institution, and I'm really struck by the ways in which philanthropy is able to show up in these spaces. I think it's really important for us to think about the ways to leverage resources, leverage relationships, and build together something that is more cohesive. Philanthropy has lots of money often to fund research or to fund planning processes but never really has the money to implement the projects, so what does it actually look like to partner in a way that is accountable to one another to ensure that decision-making and ownership of these ideas is locally based? It's a really interesting opportunity. I think there's a really critical reality as we build out and expand our Lead the Coast program, we've actually secured funding to scale that program coast-wide. It started in one parish, it scaled to six, then it was at 12, and over the next 18 months we're going to be going to all 24 parishes across the coast, with over time, plans to develop funding and secure funding to expand that program to the inside of the state and to the entire state of Louisiana.

So what does it look like to build out civic engagement infrastructure and support local leadership? How do we support residents connecting their personal experience of environmental change because that personal experience of the flood risk that comes along with heavy rainfall that we're seeing with climate trends, you know what does it look like for that personal experience to be connected to different data sources? We also are supporting different research and advocacy analysis to begin to develop some recommendations for policies. So how do we pay attention to climate-induced migration, which is ongoing in Louisiana, this is not a future scenario, how do we pay attention to where those population trends are going? What impacts that has to capacity to provide local services and government funding, and what tipping points might occur related to insurability, the ability to finance or bond ability in certain areas, and then how does that also connect to other issues like affordable housing or like public health care, transit options? Because all of those conversations are starting to happen in Louisiana. And finally, how do we lift local stories and support our local leaders in actually building out a new narrative about what this work actually looks like, about what the critical needs are, and what the immediate things are on the horizon? There is so much work to be done, we could all spend every day for the rest of our lives doing it. What would it look like for us to actually be better coordinated and actually leverage the activities of our partners, friends and neighbors, family, allies. Thank you.

Bresette

So I always have questions and I have a follow-up question for you quickly Liz. The template that you used here, it's really remarkable and it seems like it's—was this a template for the Lead the Coast, was this something that you that your organization borrowed from a previous effort? Or because of the sensitivity of some of the discussions was it something that you created specific for community-based coastal resilience?

Russell

So that's a great question, the Lead the Coast program was a spinoff of the Foundations Together Initiative, which was another leadership development program that was less issue specific. We created this initial run of the program in 2016 and actually spent most of 2018 working with an Advisory Committee to refine and revamp that program, so now there's actually an entry level and intermediate level and a fellowship emerging. We actually are about to announce our five fellows for the next year, so it's very exciting, but it would not have been possible without BISCO and nine other organizational partners that we have brought into the fold, and that are critical parts of this work going forward. But when we initially started it, it was just us, the Lead the Coast program has been a way for us to build trust, build relationships, and grow capacity simultaneously. So as we expand coast wide and increasingly statewide, it will once again be kind of just us and then seeking out new partners, developing new relationships, connecting to skill sets and capacities that already exist in those regions and hopefully increasing, building out statewide relationship infrastructure.

Bresette

I hope it catches on because it's pretty remarkable. And you mentioned BISCO, and that leads us to our third panelist, Elder Donald Bogan Jr. Donald coordinates activities around local, state, and national issues and policies that affect communities in Lafourche and Terrebonne Parishes. He serves as a liaison between BISCO pastors in the organization. Donald was the key organizer for the community's Gulf Oil Spill Prayer Service in which 20 interfaith pastors participated with 400 people in attendance. In addition, Donald is a licensed minister of the Christian Church of God in Christ and the Executive Director of Master Builders Community Center. He has been with BISCO since 2009, and Donald I'm really looking forward to what you have to say. Thank you.

Donald Bogan Jr.

So you guys started to hear Matt talk on the funding process, you heard Liz talk about the process of gathering people, but I'm here to talk to you, and most of you are here to see whether or not the LA Safe process works. So being a participant in the process, I want to call your attention to this quote attributed to one of the members of our communities, and they say it's 'when you have to relocate, it's like a death, it plays on your mental and physical well-being.' And this survey funded by the National Association of Realtors, you can see that one in every four, one in four know family who have left, or four in ten know neighbors or friends who have left. So reality is real. Our friends and our family, they are leaving because of the loss. So LA Safe long-term impacts on social networks. So before we talk about the long-term impacts on the social networks, we have to look at the total process. The thing that was unique about the LA Safe process is that it's focused on relationships. It started with the Lead the Coast effort, which was a space created for community members, faith leaders, politicians, and yes healthy debate, a space we was educated on the issues, was educated on the opportunities available to us to solve these issues, and it helped us build new relationships and deepen other relationships.

So let's think about this process. The community leaders was brought in, educated, trained, helped the debate, they was then asked to participate in the LA Safe process, now an important part of our data, it's not that you have individuals that knows the issues, knows the limitations of governments, and now they're asked to go into the community and have those difficult debates. You don't have a bureaucrat going into the community and tell people hey, look at this map, you might have to leave. So these same community members' relations just was leverage. So Matt just can't come into my community and say hey I want to do this, but as Matt and I go into the community and because I have existing relationships in the community, and now I have been part of our process that has educated me on the issues and the limitations of government, I can have that conversation more effectively with my community. So when we look at government led planning, it's no secret that it's hard for government to include citizens.

Now I want to speak for my personal experience, particularly Hurricane Katrina. After Hurricane Katrina, I went to meeting after meeting and there was a lot of solutions put forth and each time we would put forth a solution to get our community back up and running, we was told no, no, no. And finally we asked why? Why can't we do it? Where something called the Stanford Act [sic] or whatever it was, you can't do it because of these policies and these laws. And so, what often happens was that when you're told no and then you're invited to a comment meeting where you get to offer public comment, but you wasn't at the seat for the planning, you become frustrated. And oftentimes their frustration spilled over to those public comment meetings. So you get a community member like myself that go up there and we vent about how unfair the process was, why we should have been included in the process, and in my opinion, that's the waste of space because you're not adding anything to the public comment which is essential to your community. But because we didn't have a seat at the table, that's often what happens. I find myself in more public comment meetings than I found in planning meetings. And I'm not saying that government doesn't have rules, doesn't have laws, doesn't have guidelines, but if we was proactive and we had people in the community educating community members, our leaders, on the limitations of government and how they could get involved, then when there's a disaster you will have a more, far more educated community. So now, you have community members that's aggravated, community members that's upset, and community members looking for answers. And government officials oftentimes says hey look, the people don't want to see the sausage-making business, you know it's too complicated, the people don't know how the process works, and that's used as a crutch, that's used as an excuse in my opinion. Because if you educate them and that's the highlight of this, if you educate the community, they can come up with some of the best solutions, they are local experts. And I believe that it is not only my job to educate my community, but it's also my elected officials' to help me educate my community.

So, the LA safe approach, was it effective? Well, hopefully by now the answer to you, as it is to me, is yes, it's very effective. This is a win-win situation. Why do you say that, Don? Because you gather different people into a room. You have a series of meetings, referring to Lead the Coast, a series of meetings educating them on the pressing issues, that's a lot of issues in our community. People are multi-issues right, my wife want a new car, that's the issue, but that's not necessarily be the issue that's facing my community. So you get us into the room or we can highlight and agree on the issues that we have to solve, then you give us resources to solve the issue, right, and didn't you invite us into a larger meeting for us to go into our community and bring them into the room, and then as leaders in the community we have these difficult conversations. It's also a win for our elected officials. It gives them an opportunity to be in the room, our same representatives into the room and let us know what they're fighting for, and how we can be inclusive in the fight. Don't tell me you're fighting for me, let me fight with you.

So yes, the LA safe approach was effective, it helped bring the community together, it helped us identify, helped us prioritize the issues and the problems that we're facing. Now, as I take my seat I want to say this, I've been organizing for well over a decade. And often times it might be a journalist, it might be a university that might want to come and have me fill out a survey, give me \$25 gift certificate or card, it might be a university after the VP Hospital might want to draw blood from our pregnant women, so I'll take hair samples so they can be studied long term. These people come to our communities, they take our story, they take our data and then they leave. I was a bit skeptical about this process, I thought that just was another person or another group of people approaching my community looking to take from it. But I'm pleased to say they didn't fly in, kiss babies and shake old people's hands, they stayed on the ground, they continued to be on the ground, they helped us deepen our relationships, go back into the community, and weave those broken relationships, mend them back again, put us into a room we could debate, put us into a room where we can highlight our issues. The enemy of my enemy is my friend. Coastal land loss is threatening my whole community. This process highlights what we have in common. I'll say it again, this process highlights what we have in common, and so if we're looking for jobs, we're looking for good schools, we're looking for education for our kids, then we have to look at those maps that Matt had up there earlier, and say where are you gonna live? They didn't make me a liar. When I presented them to my community, they didn't leave, and I wasn't a liar, I told my community that it was here to help, and they still there to help. Thank you.

Bresette

Thanks Donald. You said something in one of our meetings this morning that I thought was really interesting, the question came up, or I think the question you brought up was you know, why is the church involved? And you said well that's where people get together right, you have regular meetings, and I was wondering in addition to your congregation or in the inter-faith community that came together, I was wondering what other congregations you work most closely with, and seems to me like sort of another great example of how you know this process brought people together that you know may not disagree exactly, but may run in different circles.

Bogan Jr.

Oh, so BISCO's multi-faced, so we work with a host of faith leaders, whether it be Catholic, Baptist, non-denominational, we're able to put aside our theological differences by emphasizing the needs that we have. Well like I said people are multi-issues so sometimes we might be working on the local garbage pickup, we might be working on stop sign issues, local, state, and federal issues, but the ability to highlight relationships when you get people in the room, and you able to get people to prioritize the problem, then you're able to come about solutions.

Bresette

Thanks. Our final panelist is right here, he's sneaking up on me, I guess it's because the chairs are so close, took me a couple panelists to figure that out but figured it out. Dr. Justin Kozak is currently a researcher and policy analyst with the Center for Planning Excellence, a nonprofit planning organization in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. His work includes writing community adaptation and resilience plans, developing planning guides, and most recently developing an educational game on watershed management. He has a certified floodplain manager, his PhD is in Environmental Resources and Policy from Southern Illinois University, and he was a National Science Foundation Igrt Fellow in watershed science and policy. Looking forward to hearing from you, Justin.

Justin Kozak

Thank you, Dan. So when I was asked to come speak here, it was kind of short notice, and I'm happy to be here and I'm glad you guys all kind of touched on some of the points I'll be bringing up on this. First off, Center for Planning Excellence, we're a mission driven nonprofit, as Dan said, we're in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, we're committed to driving positive change throughout Louisiana and really trying to bring strategies to address all of the challenges we're facing. One of the unique things about our organization is that we work at the state level and we work at the local level, so this gives us a broad perspective for a lot of planning efforts, which is why we were really excited to work on the LA Safe plan, because as we've heard it really merged those two things together in a really nice way that was really effective.

And so from this broad perspective and from our experience with LA Safe, I've been asked to talk about like the need for transformative policy and governance right, like why did this work, why did other things not work. So you know we talked about developing plans with the community and how there was an established buy in and ownership right, they're educational, they get local innovation. They are also politically palatable right, that's important, but as Matt was saying, the foundation for that was the good data and modeling that came from the CPRA. This is data and modeling that if we didn't have this large state effort, would not have been available to these communities on which to build that plan off of. But most importantly, as Donald was talking about, they didn't make him a liar right, this data comes in, Matt presents it, and community members are sitting there and tying that to their own personal experiences, right, they look at that and they say oh you know this data is right, I recognize my community in that data, so you know it provided that common space with which to move forward with. But LA Safe is a unique program right, it had a unique funding stream. There's almost always a disconnect in doing something like this, so you can create that plan but there's a disconnect between adoption of those plans. Yes, those best plans are made at that community level, but most places at the local level lack the capacity to develop a plan like this, even fewer have the capacity to implement a plan like this, and even fewer are able to actually like continue it and monitor and maintain, like those policies and programs that are in that plan over time.

Now every place is different, and all of our local planning efforts, we always hear the same version of the common statement. It's, you know, we're just trying to keep the lights on, right, you know there's a backlog of work, there's immediate needs in the community, they don't have the luxury of planning long-term. But that kind

of long-term thinking is exactly what we need for adaptation planning, you know Rome wasn't built in a day, but neither were our levels of risk and vulnerability right, it took a thousand decisions to get where we are today, and you know if we can't start making decisions that buy down that risk and vulnerability over time, how are we going to get to a point where we can have more resilient communities? And that kind of goes back to what Matt was saying about how we have you know the CPRA data and this range of time horizons and multiple scenarios to consider. That CPRA data allowed us to look 10, 25, and 50 years in the future. Now if we had come in and just said, hey here's a look, let's put together a 50-year vision, it's not really workable right, people don't think that far ahead of time, the biggest investment most of us will make is a 30-year mortgage. You know, maybe your kids are grown up and out of the house in 20 years, you may be thinking about buying a new car in five right, those multiple time scales allowed us to put it into perspective to really look at how this is going to change over time, and most importantly prioritize the next steps that need to be taken. It made it real, it made it feasible.

But there's another challenge we have associated with like the timing of this, and that's that adaptation planning is looking long term, but hazard mitigation, disaster recovery efforts, and the funding streams that are tied to those efforts, they're attached to like these singular events right, they're largely tied to hurricanes, wildfires, floods. Those happen immediately, they're highly visible, the immediate needs of people is pretty obvious to understand. And because of that, we're used to these disasters and we're pretty good at responding to them. Part of the reason for that, after a disaster everybody's in the same room together, so you know they hunker down and that the EOC and whatever issue pops up, there's probably the person you need to talk to you right there in a room with you. But that level of coordination, collaboration, communication, falls apart as you go from disaster response and people leave the room and you in a disaster recovery. And then when you're talking about long-term planning, well you're not just planning for the next disaster, but you're trying to plan across disasters. How do you maintain that level of collaboration and communication?

So that really goes to the point of you know, these drivers of change that we're looking at, sea level rise, land use decisions, these are slow-moving drivers of risk and vulnerability. And that the speed of that results in a lack of urgency right, this is something that we can put off, it doesn't have that immediacy, doesn't have that feeling of we need to take care of this now. And so you know, the migration of people that we see moving away from the coast, that's a lot less noticeable than the storm surge that inundates that community. The thousands of land-use decisions that result in a more vulnerable population and at-risk infrastructure, that's a lot less noticeable than a fire or flood that destroys that place. So now, these decisions, there's another important point here, those land-use decisions, each one individually, you could argue, are rational decisions, but every one of those decisions adds up to an irrational result. So in a country where most places don't have the capacity to plan long term, how do you know and connect the dots of all of these rational decisions that are leading to this irrational result? How do you plan for a future and stepping back, how does the state and federal levels support those efforts? And even if you do get that support, there's another challenge. State and federal agencies, their processes, they don't really align with local adaptation needs, there's crossing a lot of boundaries, there's a lot of you know, interconnected issues that we're dealing with. So agencies aren't set up for that, they've got specific missions, they try and stay in their lane, they try to avoid mission creep, it can also be pretty territorial, but the multi-dimensional challenges that we're trying to address with plans like LA Safe, that overlaps a lot of these issues, so this rigid structure isn't conducive to this long term planning that we need to address these issues. So that really is a fundamental challenge for us, we need these institutions to be stable, but adaptation requires them to have flexibility.

So I want to go back to the slide that Matt brought up, I think Liz had it too, where we're looking at this population movement from the coast to higher ground. So Matt mentioned these places that are losing people, they're lower income, lower median income, and older, that changes your disaster response. But how many of the school districts or you know Departments of Education are looking at maps like this, or looking at data like this, and thinking about their future investments? Are the receiving cities, the ones that are growing, or do they have a plan for maintaining acceptable class sizes, do they have a development framework that can absorb that population without putting them back into a high-risk area? As people move away from the coast, as Health and Human Services is looking at this data and thinking about how their services need to shift to change this demographically different population. More fundamentally, looking at a picture like this, how do you invest in a high-risk area that's losing people? How do you disinvest from that area and leave people behind? How do you justify an investment in a receiving community when you know there's other places that demonstrably have a greater need? So those just a lot of the questions that we grappled with in LA Safe. At CPEX we're working on a

way of trying to rethink the state's approach to adaptation planning and to align state agency efforts. But at the start of this we kind of had to step back and think like, how do we think about this challenge?

So along with some colleagues of ours that are helping us think through this, we kind of realized we're not really dealing with one emergency right, that one challenge, we're dealing with three of them. The first one, it's a tip of the iceberg here, it's the real emergency right, this is the one we're all familiar with. I had pictures of them up there. This includes dealing with the immediate aftermath as well as the consequences of taking action or not taking action, when a disaster hits. These real emergencies are highly visible. These are the destroyed homes, the damaged livelihoods, the economic losses, the visibility of these real emergencies allows political capital be gained, because as you respond, people see that, and when we were dealing with these, our question, because its immediate needs, it's like are we doing things right, are we responding to this immediate emergency the right way.

But then just below that, just below the tip of that iceberg, just below surface, the thing you can't really see is that conceptual emergency. Alright, as sea level comes up, it's changing our benchmarks, it's changing how the land works and how the storm surge hits us. At some point, business as usual isn't going to work anymore, should we build it back? What do we do if we don't build it back? So this conceptual emergency is like how to manage this highly interconnected and rapidly changing system and not leave people behind and build that resilience. It makes us reconsider our responses to these things. Overcoming is difficult though because they're less visible and it's not just challenging the status quo but it's actually finding a way to change that. When we're dealing with this, we no longer ask, are we doing things right? We ask what are the right things? You know, should we build it back?

And then finally there's that existential emergency right at the bottom of it. I know Donald mentioned a few things that kind of touch on this. It involves shifting worldviews, it's the changing cultures, assumptions, and mindsets, it's questioning deeply-held assumptions such as what constitutes progress and development? At this point, we're asking ourselves what is right? So take the bayou communities of Louisiana for example, where much of the LA safe work occurred. They have an outsized influence on the culture and identity of the state of Louisiana. When you go to New Orleans, that's a lot of bayou culture there, but they're losing land and flood risk is increasing. And faced with repeated disasters, population loss, disinvestment, school closures, shifting industries, it's under threat. The red on these maps represents land loss. As Liz mentioned, even under a best-case scenario for Louisiana, there are communities that in 50 years are not going to exist. What kind of questions would you ask yourself if you knew your childhood home, the home your parents grew up in, your grandparents, if it wasn't going to be there in 50 years? So that's kind of what we're dealing with in Louisiana, but again, as Matt said our unique geography puts us ahead of the curve on this, which isn't exactly a great place to be but it allows us to come here and talk to you about things like this.

So what's next? How do you incentivize those big ideas like LA Safe? Well there's no real script for this type of planning right, adaptation planning isn't super new but the scale and the scope of the problems that we're dealing with, that's pretty unique. So we don't have step-by-step instructions, you know, we have different weather patterns, changing climate, an altered landscape, every land use decision we make changes the hydrology of how a flood is going to respond. Like I said, sea level rise is literally changing our benchmarks so we can't even look to past strategies to address future ones. But because every place is a different context, there's not gonna be a recipe for this, but we can point out some key ingredients. The first we heard right off the bat, you need good data and modeling. And I will point out this is the easiest part of all of it. It's just, you get some people together, you get some bright minds, you model it out, you have the best data and then you ground truth it, you verify it. And Louisiana's fortunate to have the CPRA, but that wasn't really a result of forward thinking on our part, it was the result of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita right, it pushed straight past that real emergency of responding to it and to that conceptual emergency of asking what is the right thing to do here? And part of the answer to that was we need better data and modeling so that we can anticipate when we can start to restore and then put in protection projects to help protect the state of Louisiana. But above all, the most important thing that that conceptual emergency gave us, it was a clear-eyed view of what we're facing right, some people had warned us of it but there wasn't consensus on it, and Katrina and Rita really drove home that point. This is a big challenge and it's going to change the face of the state for a long period of time. So projects like LA Safe that rely on this data, that rely on that modeling and then use it to engage the community, more of that's needed in Louisiana.

Next you need to start the conversation. Liz did this with Lead the Coast, Donald continued it as he was still one of the people involved in Lead the Coast. You know, they had those difficult conversations, they straight-up went in and said restoration and protection isn't enough. We need to do more, there's no question we have to adapt. We need to understand what's coming and plan for it, we need to find a way out of this, so that from top to bottom we're all understanding what we're dealing with and can consider what those right things to do are. And I touched on this a little bit earlier, but we need to build in flexibility to a lot of these programs. Adaptation planning is going to require us to work at multiple scales across jurisdictions that traditionally aren't worked across, we're going to need every tool in the toolbox. And part of the reason for that needed flexibility is because as we start that conversation, people are going to ask questions that we haven't thought of yet, and if people are asking questions you haven't thought of yet, you're gonna get answers that you also haven't thought of yet, and that's why you need that. That's also this need for flexibilities, well I have a personal vendetta against the word solutions, in this sort of you know this job, right, it's not a solution if it only works until it doesn't, it's a strategy. Words matter, so a strategy also has that connotation and it acknowledges that adaptation is a process, that resilience is a moving target, that's why we need strategies to address these challenges we need to revisit them often.

And finally you need leadership. Matt and OCD were able to witness grant money and come in and provide that leadership. But if Matt had come in and said what he said in these meetings, without Liz's work starting that conversation, without Donald working to start that conversation, without the CPRA good data stuff, he might have gotten rotten fruit thrown at him, probably made a gumbo out of it but anyway, but with that leadership and with that good data and modeling, with that flexibility built into this unique funding stream, and with starting the conversation, Matt was able to come in and provide this vision right, this common purpose that everybody then was able to sit down, debate strategies about it right, they're not debating the data, that data exists, they sit down they debate strategies and what those next steps should be, and how to prioritize it and what they see in the future for their community.

Bresette

Thanks Justin, that was great. I'm gonna leave my follow-up question for the Q&A, because and I'll start with you, because you kind of led into it a little bit, but one thing that I noticed looking at those presentations is the photos. The photos of these events were not seas of chairs with people in them, they're people like engaging with each other over tables pointing at things, just really really powerful photos and I think I can, I wasn't there obviously, but I think I can imagine just how impactful and productive those conversations had to have been. It's obviously no surprise that LA Safe has been so successful. I'm going to get started with Q&A, and like I said Justin I'm gonna start with you, and this is something that you kind of hinted about a little bit, maybe it's the professor or the former teaching assistant in you, but you had lots of questions, and now I'm gonna make you have lots of answers. And then we'll go down the line and then we'll open it up, but of what you've seen in the LA Safe, if you were going back and creating curricula for people who were in your line of work, what would you institutionalize, what would you want to take from LA Safe that worked the best, and just make sure that every one of these activities, every one of these processes from here on out has? What are those kinds of qualities?

Kozak

I think for me it's the broad approach right, so we talked about resilience and you know, you ask 10 people what the definition of resilience is and you get 10 different answers. But we, the LA Safe team didn't come in and say we want to talk about this specific thing and put people in a box right, we said here's this problem, here's this challenge, and how do you want to address it, what do you think the needs to do are, and we can support you with data and the modeling and we can support you with planning effort and visualizations, and these activities to try and get some of that creative energy and get conversations going. But it really was that you know we have this foundation that we can build from, and there's a definite need in the community for this, and just leaving that open and letting people run with it. I think that was one of the biggest strengths, and from a public meeting perspective one of the most fun things about it was just seeing how people can take it and run with it.

Bresette

Donald, what do you think? What would you like to see institutionalized, whether it's in a resilience context or maybe other issues that's facing your southern Louisiana community?

Bogan Jr.

The relationship building process, I think that is key, the key element to it is that before you can come up with any strategy or solution you have to have those relationships. One quick story, I'm from Southeast Louisiana, inherently we story tell. Two individuals, one rich, one poor, both needed a life-saving surgery. One doctor. The doctors saved the poor man. When asked, why did you save that poor man when a rich man offered to give you anything you wanted? Simple, the poor guy was my son-in-law. Relationships matter.

Bresette

Fair enough. Liz, you're coming at this from a funder's perspective, so you have you know the Golden Rule, you have the gold you make the rules, what would you want to see your sort of future fundees, your future grantees implement from the LA Safe experience? What would you like to see institutionalized?

Russell

So, I think in terms of the collaboration and coordination between organizations, that's something we can influence with our type of philanthropic resources, but when you ask you know, what would you like to see institutionalized, this was a one-off process. This was a process that had a particular federal funding stream, that without some type of institutionalization at the state level, we may not see again. Of course, there are lessons being learned in some ways and being incorporated into various state activities, but there's not actually any solidification of this type of meaningful engagement, or thinking about the continuation of this work, it's just another one off, and that you know we've had Katrina, Rita, Gustav, Ike, Isaac, the BP drilling disaster, and then two cloudburst rain events in 2016, and every one has had a separate process to respond to it, in terms of planning and deciding what steps are next. And it feels exhausting, there's so much planning fatigue in our communities, because there's always folks coming down and asking, but there isn't necessarily a thread that comes through that pulls the work from LA Safe into the next thing, in terms of actual law and policy that would allow it to do so, and I think we're always going to be in this cycle and sort of exhaustive rhythm unless we actually take those steps to institutionalize some of the meaningful participation, community involvement and design and decision making processes, and sectors that aren't environmental to be required to really consider the impacts of environmental change, whether that's human decision-making or whether that's climate change, but what does it look like to actually make sure those things are systematized?

Bresette

And Matt, from your perspective, what would you like to see institutionalized from your experience with LA Safe?

Sanders

Well I'll turn it around to say I was in a conversation earlier today in one of our representatives' offices, and they asked well, you know, how should we think from the Capitol Hill perspective about you know nationwide building standards? And I said well I don't know if it's really appropriate to try to answer that question at the national level on Capitol Hill, alright, what might be applicable and most appropriate in Louisiana may not be most appropriate in Oklahoma, and so on and so forth. What I think can be institutionalized is streamlined information right, so as everybody has mentioned, we weren't able to do this without good information that our state invested in to help us understand, specifically our surge flood risk over a period of time. I think if we invest in the resources and the toolkits necessary by which we have a commonly accepted set of information regarding all kinds of disaster risk, whether it be floods in Louisiana or fires in California, then we're providing tool sets to practitioners on the ground to use their bases of knowledge to the greatest extent possible in developing implementations that work best at the local level.

Bresette

Thanks, let's open it up, I know we have a question here in the front row, Savannah will come over in just a moment with the microphone and that's so that the people who are following us online will be able to hear as well thank you.

Audience

Thanks so much for the presentation, I'm with the Georgetown Climate Center and I know you work with with my colleagues, but I'm also from Opelousas, Louisiana, and I'm just really thankful for the work you're doing and thankful for the engagement you have, and I'm thinking about finance issues and financing, and there's a limited amount of money, and I'm concerned about you know, insurance premiums rising, credit ratings falling, and wondering what's going on with that? Is LA Safe dealing with that, are you seeing any of [that], are you dealing with any of those issues I guess and how big are they in Louisiana and what the solutions might be.

Sanders

Thank you yeah I'll go first, and then turn things over to my colleagues. The direct answer to are we dealing with it, you know we can't help but not deal with it in Louisiana I think as you know, so we have you know as a matter of tradition in Louisiana, we have familial owned real estate, so a lot of people have the entirety of their own personal wealth invested in real estate equity, that over a period of time has declined in value by virtue of the fact that it has been subject to repetitive disaster events, and an inclining sense of risk. Now, I think one of the challenges that we face in Louisiana is that we're not adequately pricing risk in Louisiana or anywhere else, and that's largely tied to you know, some of the I guess indecision regarding the future of the National Flood Insurance Program. But one of things that we face is that over the long period of time should NFIP be reformed in such a way in which it's no longer heavily subsidized, everybody's being rated on a true actuary table, you know you're gonna see a precipitous evaporation of real estate wealth in places like Louisiana instantaneously, and I think people are starting to understand that. But the unfortunate part of it is, we're still seeing investments made that are ultimately going to be if not worthless, significantly diminished in value whenever the economy changes relative to this problem. So, you know there's kind of a first do no harm mantra and that we need to think about the future development activities we're engaging in, but there's also a current condition where people already know they're underwater and they don't really know what to do about it, so the answer is yes we're dealing with it by necessity, but I don't think we have good resources or answers to provide the public that is living in this dire set of circumstances as of now.

Russell

I would also add that every investment at the state level should have an analysis about what's revealed in the Coastal Master Plan regarding those current assets, existing programs, future investments. I mean at the state level we have a Department of Transportation that hasn't historically paid attention to the horizontal movement of water in their planning of roads and transportation and other development policies. We have a Louisiana economic development that hasn't necessarily been thinking about what it looks like to incentivize inclusive economic growth in areas poised to remain high and dry over time. Our Department of Health hasn't necessarily historically been thinking about what it looks like to manage our public health infrastructure either, that already exists in asset form or that needs to exist, because we are seeing upticks in suicide rates and mental health care needs, in some of our parishes losing the most land. So one of the biggest steps that we need to take, and I would love for Justin to speak to some of the work CPEX is doing in more detail, to engage other agencies, is actually ensure that every investment increasingly has a lens and an understanding of those current and future environmental risks. And I would say as our constituents are becoming more and more informed, they're also consumers that are making decisions that are aligned with what they're learning, but that also will have rippling effects into the private sector, past the public sector of course. The last thing I'll say is that we know, and you saw this on our population movement maps, that residents with resources are the ones who are able to pick up and move. The residents with resources are the ones able to think about adapting and able to finance their own adaptation, and so unless we are making sure that every single wetland restoration, green infrastructure, adaptation investment is actually creating small business opportunities locally, local job opportunities and workforce opportunities, the growth of new and emerging sectors, we're actually missing the opportunity to use

those projects to in fact start to finance the wealth of the people who will actually have to start making decisions to adapt. Those two things are not separate.

Kozak

Yeah and so just to speak to a little bit of the work that CPEX is doing, last October we had a resilience building workshop. We had the governor for several hours, but we had his chief of staff, his cabinet, the head of every state agency, and their top bureaucrat in those offices, and in those two days we talked about what are the drivers of change in Louisiana, and we centered it around the good data and modeling of the Coastal Master Plan. We said, are you thinking about this data when you make a decision in your agency? And even at that state level we got that you know we're just trying to keep the lights on, we're just we're trying to do this, and so you know the answer to that isn't more government right, we don't need to get them more, but the answer there is how do you adjust their missions, how do you adjust their day-to-day processes so that that resilience lens that understanding of this long-term challenge is built into it. And so we're in the exploratory phase now doing interviews and looking at the overlapping issues that they deal with, not necessarily like they're duplicating work, they all have their own lanes that they stay in, but these issues are no longer single purpose issues, they cross a lot of boundaries and so, you know Liz touched on quite a few of them there, it's you need to be looking at this data and the master plan process which used to be every five years, I think it's every six years now, that provides a good opportunity for these agencies to look at this, consider it, provide input, maybe provide their own chapter or like a two-page, here's how we see our work fitting into this and how we're going to not just be simpatico with the master plan but actually contribute to helping build that resilience alongside of the restoration and the the risk mitigation projects that the CPRA is doing.

Bogan Jr.

Short answer is yes, I remember years ago, I was running around with papers and showing people estimates of what their flood insurance might be up, man look, you can be paying 28 thousand dollars a year, look you can be paying \$5,000 to get flood insurance, and my neighbor's, my friends, and the pastors I work with laughed at me, 'oh they'll never let that happen', I said man they already passed the biggest water act, right, so it's very important that our community is educated on the process, educated what's going on with the process, because that was already law and no one in my community had any idea how it was going to be impacted, so yes we hear those things, traditionally in the disaster prone area, people just cope with the issues, they take it as it comes.

Bresette

We have a question here, one moment we'll wait for the microphone, thank you.

Audience

Can somebody describe some of the components of this coastal land use plan and some of the projects that were voted on?

Russell

So, I'm not sure in terms of the plans that are ongoing, the state has the Coastal Protection Restoration Authority, which was established after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and produces, as Justin said, every six years a new Coastal Master Plan. Our most recent iteration is 2017, the projects that are included in that plan include mostly wetland restoration, as well as structural risk reduction measures like levees, dikes, and dams, and non structural risk reduction measures like buyouts, elevations, and flood proofing. The LA Safe process included \$40 million of investments in 10 projects that were selected by the public, this process from the state side was managed by a different state agency and those projects really spread across sectors, from a business incubator to expansion of mental health care services, green infrastructure, a safe harbor for fishing boats, and of resilient affordable housing prototypes. So lots of different sectors, but Matt maybe you could speak to, I know all of those projects are not necessarily OCD's wheelhouse in the long term...

Sanders

Yeah, so think about it this way. So, if the Coastal Master Plan is Louisiana's answer to the question of over a 50 year time frame, how do we restore as much of our coasts as possible and how do we implement large-scale infrastructure to provide as much risk reduction as possible? Then what we've started to do here through LA Safe is to say well, what is the 50-year housing plan relative to our climate future, what is the 50-year economic development plan relative to our climate future, what is the 50-year transportation plan relative to our climate future, and within that paradigm we have a series of demonstration projects, ten in total, that embody all those ideas right, so we have a what we call a resilience piggyback project in Lafourche Parish. And what that is is, it takes a model that we have already used at the Office of Community Development to blend low-income housing tax credits with Community Development Block Grant funds, and we did it in such a way that we wrote into the funding opportunity to our affordable housing development community, very specific requirements relative to site selection, that takes into account everything we know about our climate data moving forward, takes in very specific accounts relative to building standards, so that any conceivable flooding event we can think of over a 50 year time frame, in other words the lifespan of the asset, how are they designing that structure to account for that 50 year time horizon? So that's one example from a housing perspective. We've got something called Morganza to the Gulf in Terrebonne and Lafourche parish that is designed to be this massive risk-reduction structure that will protect larger metropolitan environments. Well, LA Safe asked the question what about those people that are permanent residents that are on the wrong side of that Morganza line right, and so in response we have a bio program that is strategically targeted to those people that are permanent residents outside of Morganza. Transportation networks, so LA 61, commonly known as airline highway, runs through a place called St. John the Baptist Parish, it is both a high ground corridor around which new economic activity can and should be coalesced, but it's also a place that suffers from periodic flooding in and of itself. So we have a street revitalization project that builds out retention and detention of water along that particular corridor, while also incentivizing economic development along that same corridor. So I can't answer your question to say that you know LA Safe is any one thing or the projects themselves embody any one thing, but it's an approach to development that we would hope to be scaled and replicated en masse.

Bresette

We have a question over here, mic will be right with you.

Audience

Thanks yes, good afternoon, great panel, my name's John Bird with National Society of Professional Surveyors NSPS, my question goes that the data issue that impacts NFIP and several other agency programs for surveying and mapping and geospatial data, there's a Louisiana politician that once told me that elevation is a salvation of inundation. And the national elevation program in the country is run by USGS, it's known as the 3D Elevation program, just curious as to, because FEMA contributes to it and the Corps, how much from LA Safe's point of view, is that the kind of data that you're utilizing for resiliency, for surge modeling, all the other kind of mapping opportunities out there? Is that something that y'all are familiar with or would leverage at the state and local level as well?

Sanders

So we actually had this debate amongst ourselves last night, and the question was you know, how many states have statewide LIDAR that was shot relatively at the same time, and so the question is not I think relative to the availability of data and toolkits like you're alluding to, it's the consistency thereof across jurisdictional boundaries. So in Louisiana for instance, you know we have kind of this haphazard system where you might have one parish that has a flood insurance rate map that has LIDAR that was shot in 1988, right next to a parish that has LIDAR shot in 2001. Now if those two parishes want to work together and figure out how their respective development patterns impact one another, that is a virtual impossibility with the current information that's available. So the short answer to your question is yes and that we combined all of the good information we have in Louisiana, and even though I would say that we have better information than just about anybody, it's still inadequate. So the answer is yes, and we need to do a whole lot more.

Kozak

Yeah I was gonna say I think all of those data sources are brought in to bear, and checked against what CPRA has, but CPRA still brings them in. I would also add that NOAA is a great source of that data, I mean I was working in a project in Jean Lafitte, Louisiana and they got funded for some 7-foot tidal levees, and shortly after that announcement came out NOAA had already incorporated them into their digital coast viewer. And so it's been nice to see how responsive that is at the federal level, but again, the ability to look at that and then to do the type of planning that's needed right, like so you can look at that and then maybe if you print it out you could draw on it and say here's developments that are at risk or here's some transportation corridors that are going to be at risk from this, so it provides that snapshot, but it doesn't really allow you to plan too comprehensively with it.

Bresette

Thanks. Now I think I heard you talking about it earlier, there aren't that many states that have recent LIDAR right, you were saying maybe a couple.

Kozak

I think we were talking statewide coverage, like how many states have like a full statewide coverage of it, we think California and maybe Illinois.

Bresette

Okay, yeah I was wondering why is that the case? Is that something, is that an estate impediment? Is that a federal policy shortcoming? Like what's preventing that answer from being 45 out of 50 states?

Kozak

I mean Matt could probably add to this, but my guess is that LIDAR is kind of done on an as-needed basis, sometimes I know in grad school there were times when it was done based on a grant that a professor had gotten, or you know in Illinois where I went to school, the Illinois State Geological Survey is also their floodplain managers, and so that's why I think they have statewide coverage, because it's been driven largely by an academic institution as well.

Sanders

I'll just add that to say, you know the short answer is it's extremely expensive, and the secondary answer is it doesn't have immediate utility unless that data is then used to facilitate some type of risk pricing at the insurance level.

Russell

And I would also add that risk pricing could have ramifications for valuation of existing real estate, which might add a disincentive to invest in that because it would increase in some cases the insurance costs for those areas, even as it could help to inform where certain investments were made to reduce flood risk.

Bresette

Great thanks, I think we had a question, sir, I think you're next.

Audience

Yes, Ken Feeling with Storm Center Communications, but geospatial mapping, geocollaborative mapping technology. Also from Louisiana, from New Orleans, go Tigers, went to LSU. My question, when Elder Bogan made his presentation, your first slide said that relocation's like death. Okay how does the Louisiana Safe Master Plan or the Coastal Master Plan, how does it address that crucial question? Who stays, who goes, who relocates, who doesn't, how would that conversation, I guess of moving and relocating people and that decision, how has that made and who makes that decision? How's that conversation come about?

Bogan Jr.

So prior to the LA Safe process, that was communicated through maps. And it's exactly how it went. This is what we're at, this is what we we're going to be, then it's up to individuals like me to go back and study those maps, I find experts to help me understand the maps to go back into the community and say hey guys, we need to pay attention to this because in 20 years, 30 years, 40 years, 50 years, you're gonna be at risk. Since teaming up with FFL and working with Lead the Coast and LA Safe, I'm really putting people together in the room, bringing the experts in the room, and introducing people to tools like the flood resiliency to where they can go online and put in a zip code or their address and be able to find out what programs are, excuse me, projects from the state Master Plan in the area, and what the flood risk is. So prior to me being involved in this project, it was basically going to meetings, because the state is not going to have that difficult conversation, that's why it's important to have people in the community on the ground having those conversations. So going to the meetings, figuring out where my individual, we call them leaders, the people we work with, my individual leaders was in my community, what it was on the map and helping them decide, and figure out their risks.

Sanders

So I'll add to that just to say that and most of my fellow colleagues and governments thought I was insane when I went and did this, so we showed up to our first series of meetings, and we showed all this dire information, and people would come up to us and say well what are we gonna do about this? What are we gonna do about the fact that you know I might have to move away, or my kids might have to move away from this location, and my response was I don't have any idea. And you know, government just doesn't like to show up in local communities and admit that we just don't have all the answers. And it was important for me to do that because what I was trying to do is start a process by which to say, hey, I don't have the answers, and it's really not appropriate for me to come into your community and try to dictate to you what you should do about this dire scenario. So what we've really tried to do is say we've got a problem, we all have a vested interest in solving it, some of us have more of a vested interest than me, I am not likely to ever be subject to a severe flooding event by virtue of my economic status and where I've chosen to live, but what I can't do is go into the communities that are subject to those types of risk and make an equity investment in those places and in those people, so that they can begin to think through what the future of their communities will look like.

Bogan Jr.

And if I could just add this, I just want you guys to imagine this, when you mention the quote by the community member moving his stuff. My dad continued to live in the same community, the house I was born and raised in. My dad floods. He provided the opportunity for me and my siblings to have a better life. I don't flood, but that's still my dad, so it just shows you how the culture change, how the community change, and individuals that are less fortunate are a lot of elder people who have made their investments into their homes are primarily stuck in those communities.

Russell

To more specifically answer your question around the flood risk mapping, the CPRA Coastal Master Plan has a set of non-structural projects, and in those projects, which typically are within a parish but a shape file essentially of a certain geographic area, every one of those non structural projects includes flood proofing of businesses that will receive water less than three feet or are expected to receive water less than three feet, elevations of homes that would be between 3 and 14 feet, and voluntary acquisitions of properties that are 14 feet and above, meaning obviously that you have to opt in to that program and that that has to be a choice that you would make. In terms of the logistics of that, whether those buyouts would occur in groups for everyone that was eligible at one time, whether they would be staggered, what that would look like. The program is very much still in design phases, and there's an initial pilot going forward in southwest Louisiana, south of Lake Charles and Carcajou and Cameron parishes, and so they're basically designing out how that program would work in particular. So the CPRA has one suite of those projects, my understanding is that Gohsep also has some relocation projects, and also that our colleagues at OCD have some additional relocation projects.

Bresette

I think we have time for one more.

Audience

I'm Andy Feeny, I'm a retired environmental journalist, actually I write for a publication called the *Washington Socialist* right now, but I'm here as an individual. One of the questions, one of the issues that I got out of this is just how much money, I was wondering what kind of resources it costs to do the kind of planning, the community outreach planning that you did. And my sense from Liz Williams Russell's presentation is that this wasn't cheap, and this isn't common. How much would it cost to scale this up?

Russell

That's the key question right, that's the key, key question. We spent about a million dollars on our part of this process across six parishes, about a million and a half including time spent ahead and since, and that's for six parishes right, but also we didn't provide the costs for the private contractors that were doing the planning work, so that's a question for the state. You know our respective teams, we're sort of going okay, we could pay for things that the state can't, and then the state could pay for things that we couldn't, so what did it look like to actually go back and forth on that? But Matt I don't know if you want to speak to...

Sanders

Yeah so on the state side, we had a four million dollar investment, so on the whole ended up being about a million dollars a parish, now that said I think there are certainly efficiencies that could be achieved should we embark on a similar effort in the future, there was certainly no blueprint or template for how this should work, but that doesn't avoid the bigger point that investing in community and investing in people is hard, it's expensive, it's ugly sometimes, people don't really want to do, I have no idea how many miles I've put on my car or how many generally sleepless nights I've had trying to go from one place to another, and so yeah I mean it's a big investment, and I don't just mean that in a monetary sense, it's a big investment in terms of labor and people and emotional capital and everything else. So it's something that I think desperately needs to be done, but it's not cheap.

Russell

I would also add you know, one of the reasons why we're deepening our investments in the Lead the Coast program and other programs to lead on climate is because if we have deeper relationships far in advance of these processes, I mean we can do different things. Frankly, across the six parishes we had very different relationships in Terrebonne, Lafourche, and Plaquemines than we did in St. John, St. Tammany, and Jefferson. And frankly, the conditions of urban to rural in each of those parishes are different, and the nuances of how folks identify and which people they trust in order to show up to a meeting or want to be engaged in something varies, so I would say one of the most critical things is actually expanding investment in that civic engagement infrastructure, the organizing support, support for relationship building and opportunities to advocate together for things. I mean we're now in relation with folks who are calling each other four parishes away to activate on certain issues. That would have never really frankly been in that level of relationship or trust without this process, and so this is where you know we're trying to leverage what we've already built and hopefully expand that, because in terms of reducing the cost over time, it also you know, the speed of trust is slow and the value of that investment is indescribable.

Sanders

I want to add something really quickly. So I was in a conversation earlier today with one of our congressional delegation offices and Justin, and you can probably elaborate on this a little more than I can, started talking about how this gentleman named Jonathan Foray has been very involved in the LA Safe process and then subsequent to that, he procured a grant from somewhere to develop educational curriculum across a four high school area in Terrebonne Parish, and there's some competition and prize money associated with something, the upshot is, I had no idea about any of this, I have no idea what it is, I've no idea what he's doing and that's the greatest compliment I could ever receive. And so that's the type of catalytic investment that we've tried to make here right, so you invest a million dollars in a place and in a series of communities, and then if it grows legs and people expand upon that idea in their own right, then I think you've leveraged those resources in a way that is really not able to calculate frankly.

Kozak

Yeah I'll speak to that, the comment I did want to make though is yes, this did cost some money, but it's probably cheaper than not doing anything. But yeah, so and I was going to add to that of Jonathan Foray, he was one of the Lead the Coast folks, and you know he said he goes 'I didn't like what Matt came in and told all of us, but I really appreciated him for telling us that', and so the LA Safe process inspired him, he wrote a grant to the National Academies of Science, currently there are four high schools' senior environmental science classes in Terrebonne Parish; Ellender, HL Bourgeois, South Terrebonne, and I'm forgetting the fourth, sorry to whoever that is, but there's a month-long curriculum, it's tied into the state standards, so these teachers don't have to sacrifice time, did not teach to that test, and we've wrote the curriculum for them, and we introduced the you know the coastal issues, the coastal challenges we're dealing with, and then we brought in adaptation materials, the LA Safe plans, this kind of idea of like building resilience, but the best part about it is the best part about LA Safe, is that each of those high schools has \$10,000 that students are going to develop a project that gets implemented on campus to address something that they think accomplishes resilience building. So in a couple of weeks I want to start seeing these proposals, and I gotta say I'm pretty excited about it.

Bresette

That's cool. Donald, you're welcome to have the last word, right before we get your on the record Saints Falcons picks, but you're welcome to have the last word.

Bogan Jr.

Yeah just to add to that, and it just speaks to the educational piece, I'm starting off with the youth, educating the youth, and I'm teaching them to be resilient at an early age. I think that if we can start by making those investments, the easiest way I think you could explain to people when you see on TV and you know like hey a hurricane is coming, and you know old lady or the old man is in their home and they say 'look, I'm not leaving' right, and then you always walk away from the news broadcast wondering after the storm did they make it? And the reason why they stayed is somewhere along the line someone didn't have their relationship, I didn't have that trust to convince them, convince them to leave nicely.

Bresette

Great, thanks very much. We're a little over but it was well worth it, let's give our panelists a round of applause. And do you have picks? We've talked a lot about Saints Falcons today, now is your chance, I don't know what the line is, but it's double digits I'm sure.

Russell

Go Tigers!

Bresette

Okay oh thanks, this was great, before you all take off, let me just thank again representative Richmond's office for being our host today, thank you John, thank you to EESI staff, Anna, Amber, George, Melody, Savannah, Jeff, Dan O., and then Ellen and Amaury, who are on vacation this week, so thanks to everybody for pulling this off. If you want more information about this or other issues visit EESI.org, the video will be posted, the slides are outside, we have a briefing next Friday on the U.S. Renewable Energy Mix, and then the Friday after that, the 22nd we have one on Legal Pathways to Deep Decarbonization, so hopefully we'll see you there as well. And those are just the November briefings, don't get me started on December. Thanks very much everybody for taking your time out of your day to join us today, and again thanks panelists, remember what I said about chemistry, it's a pretty great panel, so thanks so much for joining us today.

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