


WORKBOOK AND RESOURCES



CULTURAL STRATEGIES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ADAPTATION AND MIGRATION

RESTORE
THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER DELTA



 LOUISIANA
OFFICE of CULTURAL
DEVELOPMENT
ARTS • ARCHAEOLOGY • HISTORIC PRESERVATION • CODOFIL



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NOTE: This workbook contains more information than may be covered in the workshop.



PART ONE: UNDERSTANDING OUR SITUATION

GOALS

- ▶ Prepare for participation in the conversation with both other policy makers/planners and community members.
- ▶ Offer strategies and tools to face disruption and ground identity
- ▶ Provide examples and resources for community planners.

More specifically, this workshop explores:

- 1.** Understanding issues and patterns related to migration within the United States
- 2.** Key concepts such as adaptation, mitigation, originating and receiving communities
- 3.** The role of community culture in our sense of identity and well-being
- 4.** How culture, particularly attachment to place, impacts decision making about migration, which makes the human dimension an integral part of the community resilience conversation
- 5.** Cautions about the complexity of adaptation/migration planning.



According to U.S. Census data, 3.2 million U.S. adults were displaced or evacuated due to natural disasters in 2022, of whom more than 500,000 had not returned by the beginning of 2023.

"Climate Migration 101: An Explainer,"

Nov 16, 2023,

Migration Policy Institute.

<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/climate-migration-101-explainer>

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- ▶ What happens to our cultures as migration and displacement increase?
- ▶ What cultural tools do our communities already have to help us adapt in place or help receiving communities better welcome newcomers?

*Environmental change is a “wicked” problem.
So are questions of adaptation and migration.*

- ▶ How is a problem “wicked”?

Wicked problems, like environmental change or problems in education policy and public health, are hard to explain simply and impossible to solve in a way that is simple or final. Our changing conversations around science and conservation, the unique regional factors that determine the local consequences of environmental, and our ability to present endless possible solutions (as well as the irreversibility of these solutions) require we approach change with holistic and collaborative reasoning in search of long-term, future focused solutions.

- ▶ Why is this so hard?

We are predisposed to think tomorrow will be like today.

Our brain rewards short-term thinking in order to survive.

And shifting baseline syndrome makes it hard to see changes.



FOCUS OF WORKSHOP: CULTURE

All culture is passed on through gatherings and education, informally or formally.

When disrupted by floods, hurricanes or moving, a community's culture may change or be lost. We will need to pass on culture with intention.

What can we do to make sure our culture, our sense of place is passed on?
What do we need to be doing now to address the human dimension in planning?

Include culture in the community resilience conversation.

IMPACT ON MIGRATION AND RELOCATION

In short, culture affects decision-making.

We need to:

Understand sense of place and solastalgia's role in decision-making.
Foster disaster-informed decision-making about transitions.

Sense of Place


The complex relationship people have with where they live;
what is special about a place that fosters a sense of belonging.

Solastalgia (Anticipatory)

Distress caused by environmental change. Losing a place without leaving home.
Homesickness when you are still at home.

– *Solastalgia, Climate Grief, and Re-storying Ourselves*. 2022.

Rick Fisher, Maggie Bourque, Glenn Albrecht



Research shows us that stories are more understandable, more believable, and more memorable than many other forms of communication.
— Neeley et al 2020

STORIES AS TOOLS

Humans are storytellers

Stories are often more persuasive than facts or figures¹.

Different formats of information — lists of facts, say, or charts — may be better suited to different situations, researchers say, but stories wield a particularly strong influence over our attitudes and behavior.

In health care contexts, for example, people are more likely to change their lifestyles when they see a character they identify with making the same change, notes Melanie Green, a communication professor at the University at Buffalo. When you hear or read about someone you identify with who has taken up meditation, for example, you might be more likely to stick with it yourself.

Stories can alter broader attitudes as well, Green says — like our views on relationships, politics or the environment. Messages that feel like commands — even good advice coming from a friend — aren't always received well. ... But if someone tells you a story about the time they, too, had to end a painful relationship, for example, the information will likely come across less like a lecture and more like a personal truth....

A vivid, emotional story [Green says] “can give that extra push to make it feel more real or more important.” If you look at the times somebody's beliefs have been changed, she says, it's often because of a story that “hits them in the heart.”

— From: “How Stories Connect and Persuade Us: Unleashing The Brain Power Of Narrative” by Elena Renken, April 11, 2020, on the podcast ShortWave.

¹ (Neeley, L., Barker, E., Bayer, S. R., Maktoufi, R., Wu, K. J., & Zaringhalam, M. (2020). Linking Scholarship and Practice: Narrative and Identity in Science. *Frontiers in Communication*, 5, 488843. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2020.00035>).



STORYTELLING EXAMPLES & RESOURCES

Story Collider

<https://www.storycollider.org/>

- ▶ Example of a nonprofit that uses storytelling to communicate about science.

Story Stitch

a program of Green Card Voices,
<https://www.greencardvoices.org/story-stitch/>

- ▶ Example of a group that uses a conversation card game to introduce new immigrants to long-time residents.

Listening to Rural Voices

The Transformative Power of Story Circles
By Hollie Russon Gilman, Sarah Jacob, Ben Fink and Dee Davis.

July 31, 2024, New America <https://www.newamerica.org/political-reform/briefs/listening-to-rural-voices-the-transformative-power-of-story-circles/>

- ▶ Example of using storytelling to discuss economic problems in rural communities.

“How — and Why — to Facilitate a Story Circle”

by Ben Fink.

October 1, 2024, Arts Midwest. <https://artsmidwest.org/resources/ideas/how-and-why-to-facilitate-a-story-circle/>

- ▶ A beginner’s guide to story circles.

“Story Circles – Pride, Hope, Community and Loss”

By Nhatt Nichols.

August 8, 2024. The Daily Yonder <https://dailyyonder.com/part-1-story-circles-pride-hope-community-and-loss/2024/08/08/>

- ▶ Using a method originally developed by civil rights activists involved with theater, organizers can learn about community’s woes, hopes, and needs.

“Why Your Brain Loves Good Storytelling”

by Paul J. Zak.

October 28, 2014. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2014/10/why-your-brain-loves-good-storytelling>.

- ▶ A quick overview of the neuroscience behind why storytelling is effective.

“Storytelling: A Peaceful Power”

By Kiran Singh Sirah

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Td8sD5KGWsE>

- ▶ A 15-minute TEDx Talk by the president of the International Storytelling Center, arguing that to achieve peace in our world, we can be the story that we want to see in the world, and we can help others too, just by listening. We are, each of us, storytellers.

It's important to understand your personal story before you work on identifying your community's story.

Maida's story caused her to rethink the risk she faced living in Baton Rouge, Louisiana — a place not known for dramatic weather.

- ▶ What is your story?
- ▶ What have your experiences been with heat, drought, rainstorms, tornadoes, wildfires, earthquakes, hurricanes, ice storms, or other weather-related events that can cause disasters?
- ▶ Is your experience one that other people in your community might share?

[illegible]

CLIMATE OVERVIEW

Climate changes by 2030

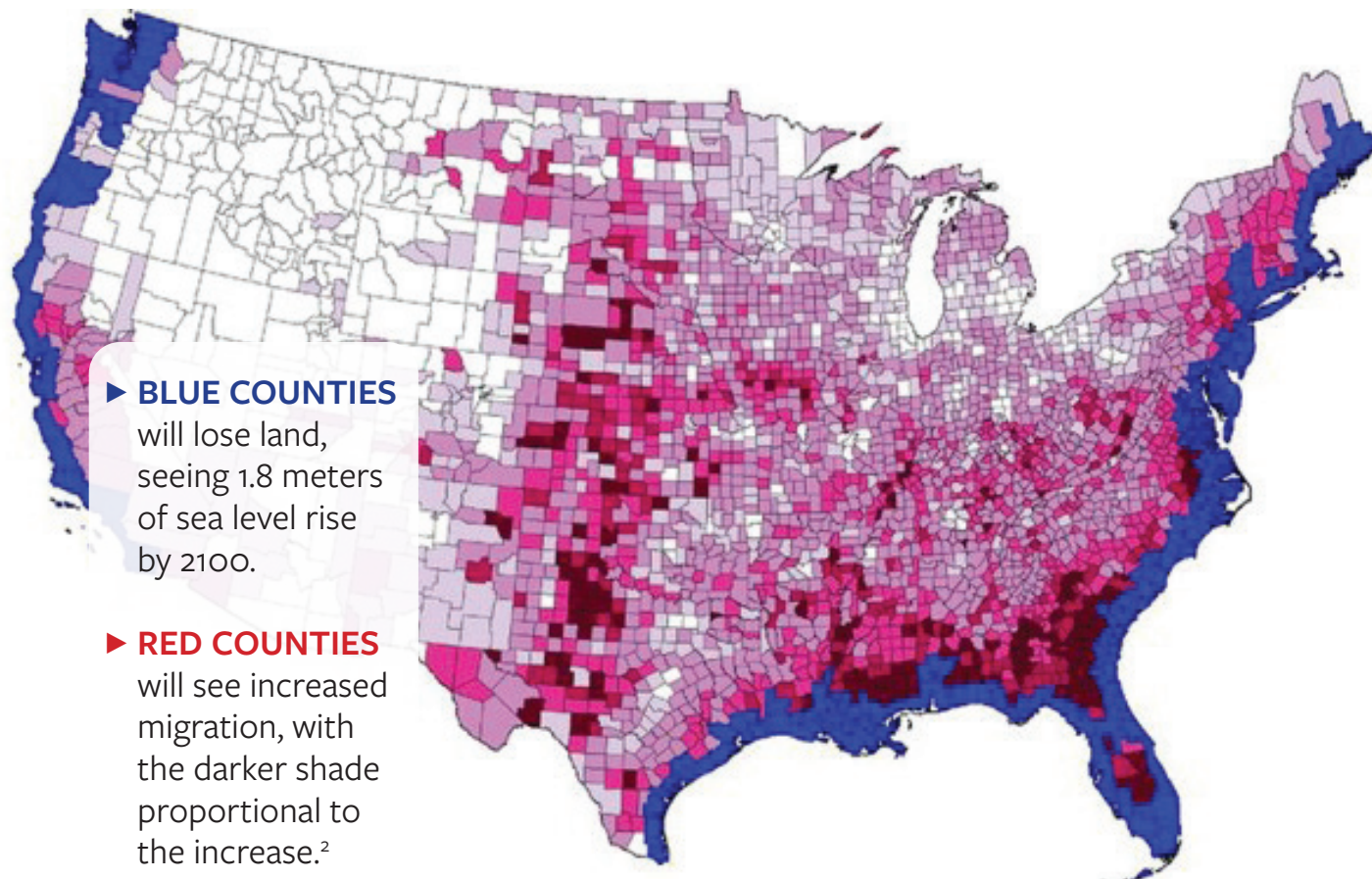
- ▶ Drought
- ▶ Extreme heat
- ▶ Wildfires
- ▶ Habitat loss and ecological shifts
- ▶ Land loss
- ▶ Subsidence
- ▶ Extreme precipitation, flooding
- ▶ Stronger storms, tornadoes
- ▶ Thawing permafrost
- ▶ More erratic, intense weather patterns

Resulting Economic Changes

- ▶ Workforce Changes
- ▶ Remote Work / AI
- ▶ Demographic Changes
- ▶ Population shifts
- ▶ Tax base shifts

Mitigation:
Stop or Lessen
Climate Change

Adaptation:
Live with
the Changes



² Modeling migration patterns in the USA under sea level rise. By C. Robinson, Dilkina B, Moreno-Cruz J. 2020. PLoS ONE journal. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0227436>

Sea Level Rise Migration Flows for US States



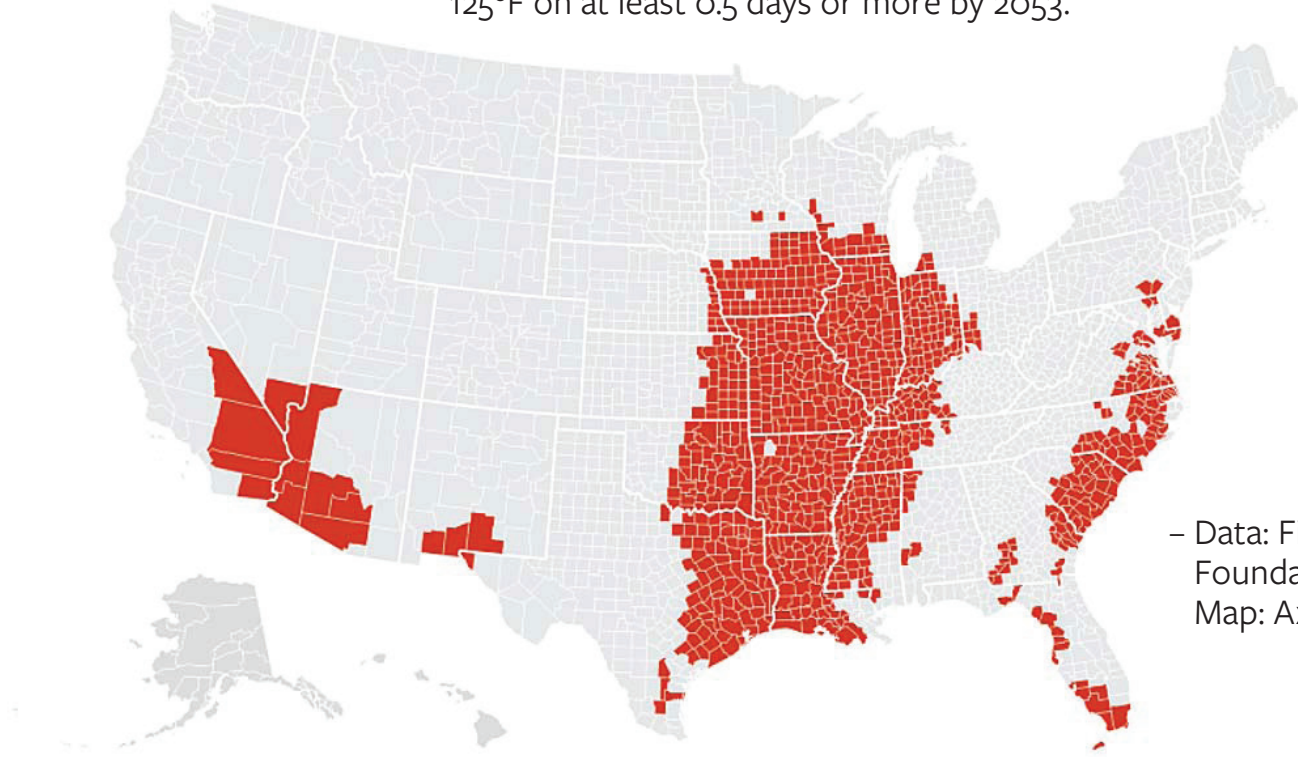
NUMBER OF MIGRANTS (INFLOWS AND OUTFLOWS).
Clockwise by the size of inflows.

TOP TEN STATES:

Florida, Texas, New York, California, Louisiana, New Jersey, North Carolina,
Georgia, Massachusetts, South Carolina, Virginia

Heat Index Rising

Counties predicted to have a heat index of 125°F on at least 0.5 days or more by 2053.

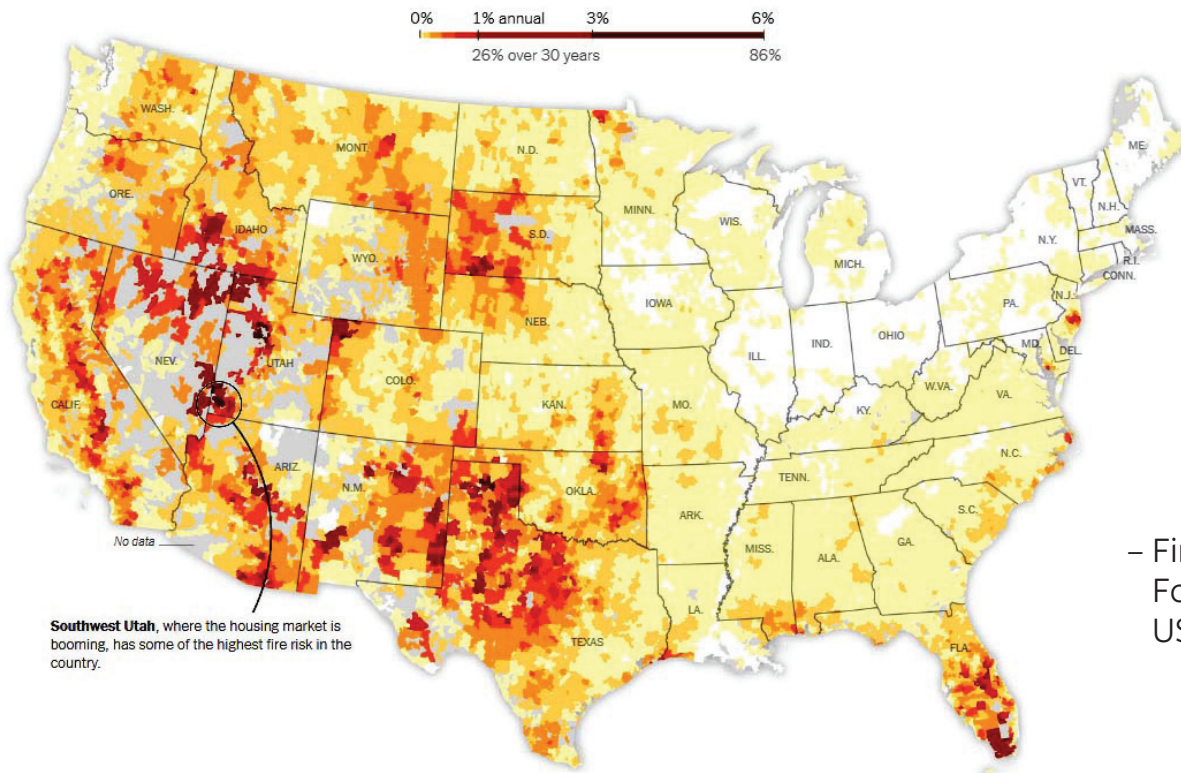


– Data: First Street Foundation.
Map: Axios Visuals.

Wildfire Risk Map

New York Times <https://nyti.ms/3PqrsVq>

Average Wildfire Risk to Properties in each ZIP Code



– First Street Foundation,
US Census

Source: First Street Foundation, U.S. Census • The map reflects Census ZIP code designations. Areas shown with no data don't have a ZIP code, indicating they have few or no residents, or, in some cases, represent areas where digitized parcel-level data was not available. Alaska and Hawaii were not part of the First Street analysis.

RESOURCES: WAYS TO ASSESS YOUR RISK

Climate Mapping for Resilience and Adaptation (CMRA) helps people assess their local exposure to climate-related hazards. Understanding exposure is the first step in determining which people, property, and infrastructure could be injured or damaged by climate-related hazards, and what options might be available to protect these assets.

- Use their assessment tool at <https://livingatlas.arcgis.com/assessment-tool/home/>

Coastal Risk Screening Tool - An interactive map showing areas threatened by sea level rise and coastal flooding. Combining the most advanced global model of coastal elevations with the latest projections for future flood levels.

- Use their map tool at <https://coastal.climatecentral.org/>

Simple Planning Tool for Climate Hazards – A compilation of interactive tools, maps, and graphs to assist planners and emergency managers in assessing long-term climate risks, created by NOAA’s Southern Climate Impacts Planning Program.

- Use to look at a range of risks in 4 states: Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas at <https://www.southernclimate.org/resources/tools/simple-planning-tool/>

Sinking Tax Base – An assessment of sea level rise impact on the tax base of hundreds of coastal U.S. counties – specifically the potential loss of taxable properties caused by shifting tidal boundaries.

- See your state at www.climatecentral.org/report/sinking-tax-base

What Will Climate Change Cost You? – First Street Foundation is an organization that provides risk assessments for governments and organizations.

- Find your home’s risk factors for fire, flood, heat and more at <https://firststreet.org/?from=riskfactor.com>
-

Use one or two of the tools provided to learn more about your risk.
In addition, ask yourself some questions:

Have you ever:

- ▶ Experienced extreme weather?
- ▶ Been concerned about trees falling on your house?
- ▶ Had your house flooded?
- ▶ Had roof damage from a storm?
- ▶ Had to rebuild your home?
- ▶ Evacuated for a weather event?
- ▶ Lost family photos in a weather event?

Do you think you are more at risk than a few years ago?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

MIGRATION OVERVIEW

In the past, the most common reasons people migrated were for a better livelihood, a job offer, or to be near family.

When do people move?

Personal Transitions

- ▶ Children starting school or graduate
- ▶ Retirement
- ▶ Health changes.
Can't get up the stairs anymore.

Community Changes

- ▶ Schools and businesses close. Services are too far away and make it difficult for a community to easily maintain its culture.
- ▶ Post office closures are an early sign.
- ▶ Luxury businesses close first (florists, hairdressers, nail salons)
- ▶ Churches can't afford a minister, keep doors open.
- ▶ Not enough people for sports teams
- ▶ Fewer gathering places (bars, Rotary Clubs, dances)
- ▶ Not enough resources to maintain cemetery, playgrounds, parks

Without these institutions, people will need to intentionally maintain culture.

Why do people living in at-risk areas decide to stay or move?

It's not just one thing.

Decision-making is complicated.

“Climate migration amplifies demographic change and population aging.”

(See Footnote 2)

More recently people are moving because of climate-

- ▶ Flood insurance cost or availability
- ▶ Homeowners insurance cost or availability
- ▶ Mortgage availability
- ▶ Buyout offer is not enough to buy in same town
- ▶ Saltwater intrusion in drinking water
- ▶ Erosion of tax base, closure of schools or hospitals

▶ Means Migration:

Those who can leave do. Young adults and middle class leave first.

▶ Managed Retreat/ Assisted Relocation/ Community- Driven Relocation

▶ Chain Migration:

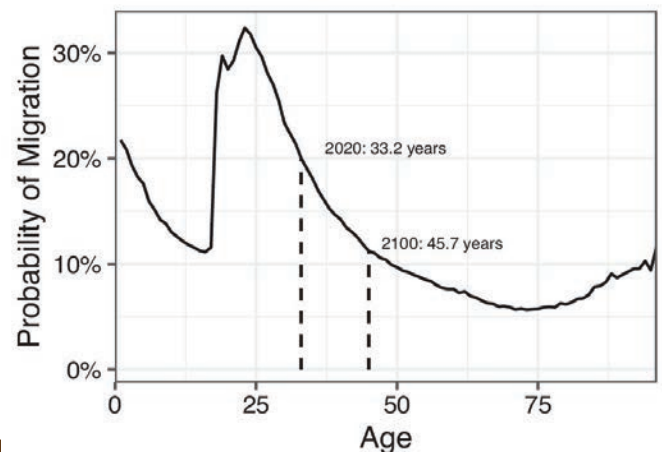
Following family and friends

▶ Forced Migration:

Involuntary movement of people

▶ Retreat and Return:

Moving back and forth, boomerangs.

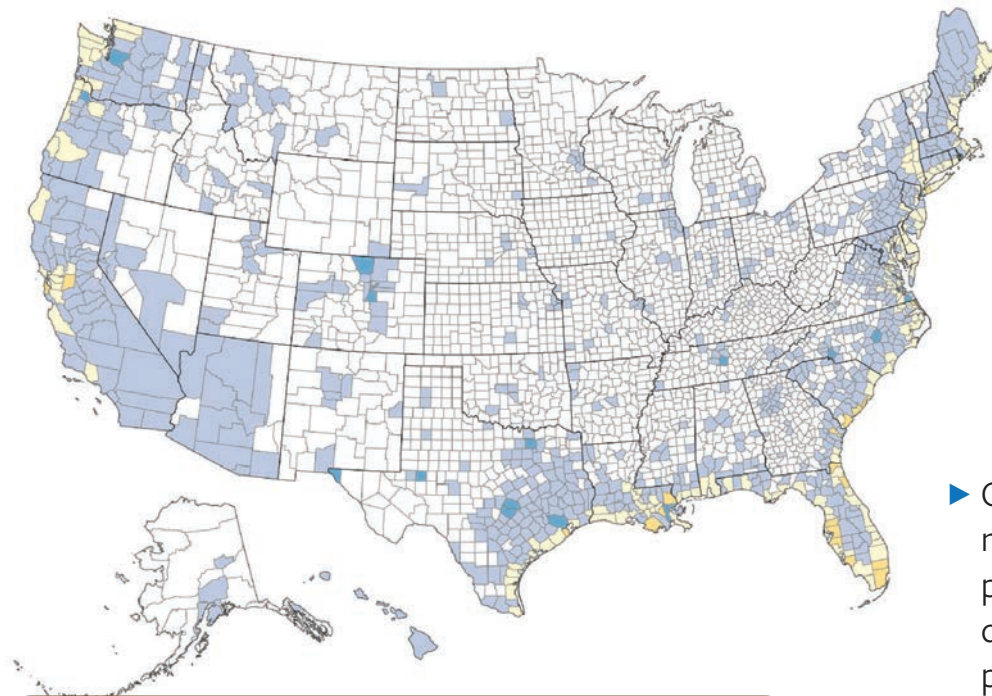


Reasons for leaving are changing: Nearly half of Americans who plan to move say natural disaster, extreme temperature factored into their decision to relocate.³

³ Redfin Climate Migration Surveys.2021. <https://www.redfin.com/news/> (Uses data from First Street Foundation.)

WHERE DO PEOPLE MOVE?

A Displacement

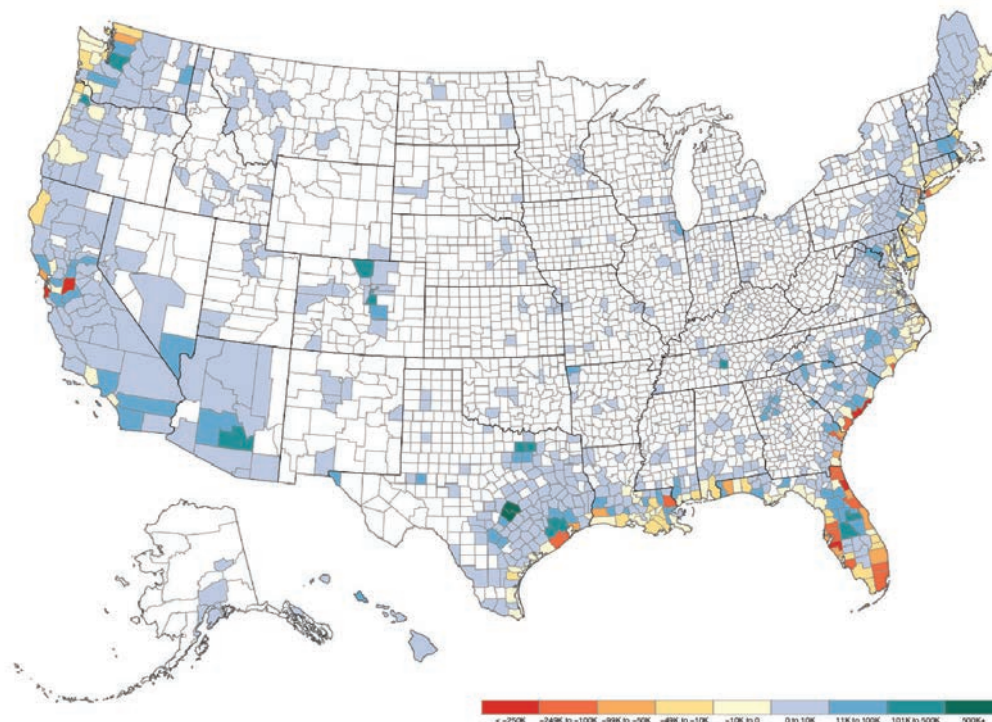


A sticky state has a high number of native-born. They tend to be resistant to moving.

— "Magnet or Sticky?: A State-by-State Typology,"
Pew Research Center, 2009.

- ▶ Counties in white have no projected change in population due to displacement or amplified population processes. These maps highlight the domino effect where climate migration further enhances migration to destinations and suppresses migration to origins.⁴

B Amplification



⁴ "Climate migration amplifies demographic change and population aging. By Matthew Hauer, Sunshine A Jacobs, and Scott A. Kulp. 2024. Proceedings of the National Academies of Sciences. <https://www.pnas.org/doi/10.1073/pnas.2206192119>

PREDICTING WHO IS MORE LIKELY TO MIGRATE?⁵

1. A family whose house is totally destroyed in a catastrophic flood?
2. A farmer who loses crops three years in a row to a drought?

LEVEL OF RISK

- ▶ Is your community high, medium, or low risk? Planning strategies differ.

ECONOMICS

- ▶ What is the basis of your economy? Is it high or low carbon-intense?
- ▶ What are the workforce skills of those likely to migrate?

DEMOGRAPHICS

- ▶ Densely/lightly populated? Increasing or decreasing?
- ▶ Are you urban, suburban, or rural?
- ▶ Poverty rates? Percentage elderly?

CULTURAL ISSUES

- ▶ Are people more likely to move to the next higher ground? Or farther away?
- ▶ Have residents lived in the area for generations? Or have they more recently arrived?
- ▶ Will people live in different environments? Are they tied to the land or water?

MIGRATION IMPACTS MAINTAINING CULTURE

- ▶ If people move away piecemeal, it breaks down the culture and social infrastructure.
- ▶ Moving up the watershed (next highest ground) helps maintain the culture and the social infrastructure, but people will need to move multiple times.

The answer to above question: THE FARMER

⁵ “What is Migration? Five Things We Know. Five Things We Don’t Know.” David Wrathall, 2023.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xAMb2wJo5iM>

Things We Don't Know:

- ▶ How many people will migrate? (It depends on global carbon emissions.)
- ▶ Where will migrants go? (everywhere)
- ▶ Who will need to migrate, but be unable? (trapped populations in the hottest areas)
- ▶ Are future outcomes already determined or do we have choice? (Migration is strongly influenced by economic, social, political, demographic processes.)
- ▶ What are the discrepancies between realities and discourses? (The way we talk about migrations is based on biases, preconceptions, prejudices against migrants.)

MIGRATION WITH DIGNITY

The Migration with Dignity framework focuses on the dignity of individuals: the framework stresses the importance of skill-building, practical knowledge, and protections essential for building peace.

– Medium.com ecosystem for peace

CASE STUDY:

The Vietnamese in New Orleans. Originally 200 people were moved as a group and resettled together. Some who were neighbors in Vietnam became neighbors in New Orleans. They shared a common variety of Vietnamese, holidays, religion, gardening and food traditions. Now the community is 15,000 people strong.



Photos: Annual Tet Festival celebrating the lunar new year (left) and Vietnamese gardening traditions, which became foundation for a Vietnamese-centered marketplace.

ACTIVITY: ASSESS YOUR COMMUNITY'S RISK

Use the tools provided to get an overview of what levels of risk your community faces in general.

Also, look at the population fluctuations over the last 10 or 15 years for your community or county. Look up some of your demographics, including median age, median income, and educational levels.

- ▶ Is your community young or old?
- ▶ Are people moving in or out?
More likely to receive climate migrants or be climate migrants?
- ▶ Are you urban, suburban or rural?
- ▶ What kinds of work do people in your community do?
- ▶ Does your community face regular weather threats
(e.g., hurricanes, winter storms, wildfires, tornadoes, etc.)?
- ▶ Is housing available? Is it expensive? How about insurance?
- ▶ Is there adequate health care? Utilities infrastructure?

[illegible]



PART TWO: CULTURE AS A RESOURCE

What is culture?

People who study culture generally define it as something like a complex whole, which includes all the knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, customs, and habits you acquire just by growing up in a place. It's the way of life that's characteristic of a particular group of people. Listed below are a few examples. And there are many more!

- ▶ Foodways
- ▶ Customs
- ▶ Traditions
- ▶ Beliefs
- ▶ Rituals
- ▶ Dance
- ▶ Music
- ▶ Crafts
- ▶ Stories and Legends
- ▶ Language
- ▶ Games and Riddles
- ▶ Occupations
- ▶ Festivals and Celebrations

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES: any activity that has significance to a culture and can be seen as a way of engaging in the culture.

Why is Culture Key?

Culture is the sum total of creative survival.

— BISHOP WILFRET JOHNSON,
PLAQUEMINES PARISH, LOUISIANA

WHY INCLUDE CULTURE IN PLANNING?

1. Culture provides a sense of well-being and community connections that will help people adjust/adapt to all the disruption. People with strong ties to culture and community support report higher life satisfaction. Culture is a source of social cohesion.. And social cohesion is a source of well-being, impacting both mental and physical health.⁶
2. There **will** be conflict between long-term residents and newcomers. There are cultural strategies to help newcomers and long-term residents adjust.

Holding onto one's culture, traditions, and networks can be as important to one's survival in a new land as gaining access to clothing, employment, and shelter.

Cultural programs create an opportunity for interpersonal interactions and for the development of healthy relationships between people who might not otherwise have the opportunity to do so.

*Social connections are critically important
for human health, happiness, and prosperity.
People need to sit down and eat together.*

— Surgeon General Report on Loneliness Report, 2023 | World Happiness Report, 2025

Well-being:

the set of needs and experiences universally required in combination and balance to weather challenges and have health and hope.

**Using well-being as a lens,
provides a way to bridge groups without judgement.**

Identify well-being assets in your community.
Provide well-being reservoirs (gathering spaces).
Be aware of well-being stripping from disasters.

– FULL FRAME INITIATIVE 2025

⁶ Sonke, J., Pesata, V., Colverson, A., Rodriguez, A. K., Carroll, G. D., Burch, S., Abraham, A., Akram, S., Marjani, S., Belden, C., & Karim, H. (2025). Relationships between arts participation, social cohesion, and well-being: An integrative review of evidence. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 13, 1589693. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2025.1589693>

There will be conflict between long-term residents and newcomers.
There are cultural strategies to help newcomers and long-term residents adjust.
These strategies also help those adapting in place.



ACTIVITY: TRUNK OF TRADITIONS

- ▶ What are some of your community's cultural traditions?
- ▶ What do you want future generations to know about their culture or community?
- ▶ What do you want to put in your trunk of traditions — either to bring with you or leave for future people?

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

You are not alone.

There are no real “climate havens” any more. Even places once thought to be climate havens – like Asheville, N.C. – face a riskier future, and infrastructure often isn't built to handle climate change. But there are steps cities can take to prepare.

STRATEGIES FOR ACTIVATING CULTURE AND LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

Types of Local Knowledge to Include in Planning⁷

- ▶ Traditional ecological knowledge.
- ▶ Fisherfolk know fish patterns.
- ▶ Porch sitter knows traffic patterns.

Use existing immigration/newcomer strategies to cope with adaptation and migration changes.⁸ Over many years, organizations and communities have created proven strategies for welcoming people.

Immigration/Newcomer Goals	Arts & Culture Strategies
Build Welcoming and Inclusive Communities	1. Bridge Newcomers and Longer-Term Populations
Empower New Americans Through Relevant Service	2. Elevate Cultural Traditions as Assets
Expand Alliances to Build Collective Capacity	3. Engage Newcomers & other Allies in Civic Processes
Establish Infrastructure in Immigrant Destinations	4. Co-Create Spaces that Reflect Identity

⁷ Climate Resilience Toolkit, NOAA Climate Program. <https://toolkit.climate.gov/>

⁸ Sources: ArtPlace America Field Scan. 2020. Bridging Divides, Creating Community: Arts, Culture, and Immigration. “There Are No ‘Climate Havens’ from Heat and Disaster Risk” By Julie Arbit, Brad Bottoms, Earl Lewis & The Conversation US. August 25, 2023. *Scientific American* <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/there-are-no-u-s-climate-havens-from-heat-and-disaster-risk/>

STRATEGY 1. BRIDGE NEWCOMERS AND LONGER-TERM POPULATIONS:

Use artist community engagement projects. They can help you draw upon research about the creative economy and creative placemaking/creative placekeeping.

TIP:
**Partner with the
Arts and Culture
Community**

Potential Partners:

- ▶ Arts Councils
- ▶ State Arts Agencies
- ▶ State Humanities Councils
- ▶ Local Libraries
- ▶ Main Street Programs
- ▶ Historic Districts
- ▶ Cultural Districts
- ▶ Museums
- ▶ Creative Gulf Network/GOAA

Look for:

- ▶ Teaching Artists
 - ▶ Arts Educators
 - ▶ Museum Educators
 - ▶ Creative Aging Artists
 - ▶ Artists focused on the environment
-

STRATEGY 2: ELEVATE CULTURAL TRADITIONS AS ASSETS:

Focus on traditions that are widely shared and can be more easily accepted.

- ▶ Foodways
- ▶ Traditional ecological knowledge, such as fishing and foraging
- ▶ Quilting and other fiber work
- ▶ Storytelling

The best way to activate your cultural traditions is to first identify community cultural assets and shared values. Three approaches:

- ▶ **Cultural Asset Mapping** – identifying people, places, things, memories, buildings
- ▶ **Folklife Survey** – documenting tradition bearers and community events
- ▶ **Community Values Mapping** – Answers questions like,
“What places are most important or valued?”

How Folklorists Can Help

Originating Communities

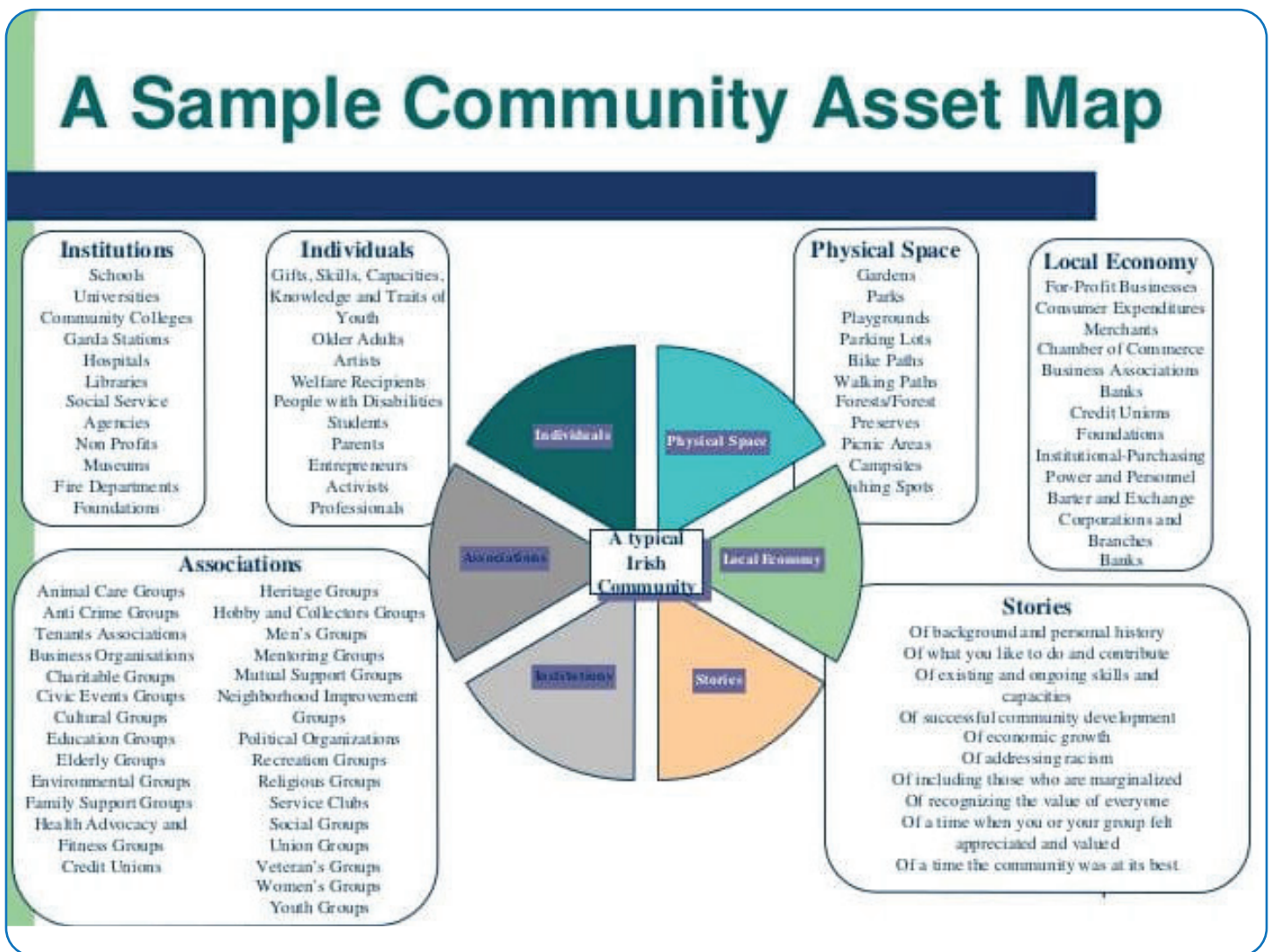
- ▶ Help identify the values, behaviors, attitudes that inform the community narrative
- ▶ Help community members embrace adaptation strategies

Historic Preservation

- ▶ Help with adaptation strategies that honor the architectural history through their established relationship with FEMA
 - ▶ Help identify community narratives to determine priority sites to save and communicate the narratives in plain English
-

SAMPLE PROJECT: Identifying cultural assets and shared values.

A sample **Community Asset Map** of a typical Irish community, in which residents identified institutions and people, cultural and community associations, physical spaces, parts of the local economy and stories that they valued.



STRATEGY 3: ENGAGE NEWCOMERS & OTHER ALLIES IN CIVIC PROCESSES

Include both the long-term residents and the newcomers in planning processes. The goal is expand your community's capacity to successfully handle disruption.

STRATEGY 4: CO-CREATE SPACES THAT REFLECT IDENTITY

Create spaces and projects in the newcomer areas of town.
Not for us without us.

Project Spotlights

Festivals:

- ▶ People test a receiving community through food, festivals, friends, and events.
- ▶ How can your community's festival draw in a wider group of community members or build alliances across the community?



Artist Community Engagement Projects

- ▶ Xavier Cortada, Underwater Homeowners Association



Artists Xavier Cortada created a series of paintings in Miami-Dade County, Florida. Homeowners can purchase a print indicating the sea level rise predicted for their home.

- ▶ Community Quilt. Baton Rouge Traditions Quilt.
- ▶ Make a community quilt



This is a wall hanging made using fusible appliqué

Identify Community Assets

- Learn from cultural groups: culture schools, camps, centers.



Identify Community Assets:

- Learn from Indigenous People.



Land Memory & Native Plants + Seed Bank, Monique Verdin, United Houma Nation

Co-create Spaces and Engage Newcomers in Civic Processes:

Public Art Projects.

- Community Murals and creating gathering places.



Life on the Bayou by Robert Dafford in 2024. Franklin Main Street Program.
Located in the Downtown Historic District

- Commemorate or memorialize communities' loss or show the connection of a community to their environment.



Lis Nouveau made from
nutria stretchers, Houma, La



Memorial to mark the closing of Upper Little
Caillou School, Chauvin, La



► Story Circles + Roadside Theater

Paying attention to newcomers' stories and traditions might ease their resettlement and build awareness and tolerance among the general public



► Community Gardens

Mental health benefits in addition to making community connections

Additional Resources:



- ArtPlace America Field Scan. 2020. *Bridging Divides, Creating Community: Arts, Culture, and Immigration*
- National League of Cities
- Lead with Listening - Climigration Network
- Arts and the Environment Survey for Arts

ACTIVITY: CULTURE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Think of a tradition in your community that could become an activity or event to help bond people.

- ▶ Do you have festivals that showcase the community?
- ▶ What about folk crafts?
- ▶ Storytellers?
- ▶ Which traditions could you elevate to an asset?

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PREPARING RECEIVING COMMUNITIES

How to identify Receiving Communities with lower risk?

How to become a Receiving Community?

While there are resources about integrating newcomers into communities, there are fewer resources about the decision-making process to migrate. That conversation is starting to happen but much is about the physical landscape. But we want to focus on the cultural landscape.

How can communities prepare for newcomers?

- ▶ Create land banks so that less at-risk areas can be used equitably and not be gentrified.
- ▶ Use the CDC Child Opportunity Index to identify community weaknesses

Strategies to know your community before newcomers arrive:

Asset Mapping, Folklife Survey, Values Mapping

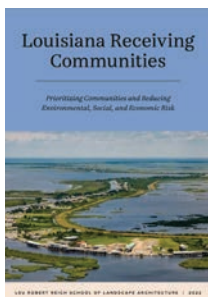
Receiving Communities

- ▶ Identify narratives in receiving communities that hinder welcoming newcomers
- ▶ Help to bridge newcomers and long-term residents
- ▶ Including traditions in art projects
- ▶ Help newcomers, long-term residents retain their traditional cultures

Documentation

- ▶ Traditions in originating communities that use coastal materials
- ▶ Changes in receiving communities
- ▶ Memorializing collapse with ritual and artwork

Additional Resources:



- ▶ *Louisiana Receiving Communities: Prioritizing Communities and Reducing Environmental, Social, and Economic Risk*, 2022. Haley Blakeman, LSU Landscape Architecture
 - ▶ *Climate Migration and Receiving Community Institutional Capacity in the US Gulf Coast*. Urban Institute, February 2023.
 - Offers recommendations for communities and regions poised to receive climate migrants to support coordination, planning, and policy.
-

Resilience is like a rubber band.
It will pop if it isn't contracted some.
-- Lanor Curole, United Houma
Nation

Words Matter

- ▶ People have different levels of awareness about coastal issues, both physical and cultural.
- ▶ We know these discussions may touch on sensitive topics, but we hope to tread carefully.

Things to consider

1. Approach with Curiosity and Care
2. Planning Should Not Replicate Past Injustices
3. Use Trauma-Informed Care

Common Planniong Terms	Preferred
Managed Retreat	Community-Driven Relocation
Collapsing, Sending, Vulnerable Communities	Originating Communities
Recruiting, Destination Communities	Receiving Communities
Climate Change	Storms/Flooding/Wildfire
Climate Refugee	Climate Migrant

Resilience - Recover quickly from difficulties; toughness

— vs —

Tenacity - Determination to continue what you are doing; don't give up easily

*Get beyond focusing on resilience and returning to “normal.”
Imagine how we can thrive.*

*Systems and communities should be resilient.
Individuals should not be expected to be resilient.*

Resource:

*Lead with Listening: A Guidebook for Community
Conversations on Climate Migration*, Climigration Network

- ▶ Approach community members as experts of their lived experience.
- ▶ First listen. Lead with questions
- ▶ Earn trust. Build relationships.⁹

⁹ *Lead with Listening: A Guidebook for Community Conversations on Climate Migration*. Climigration Network

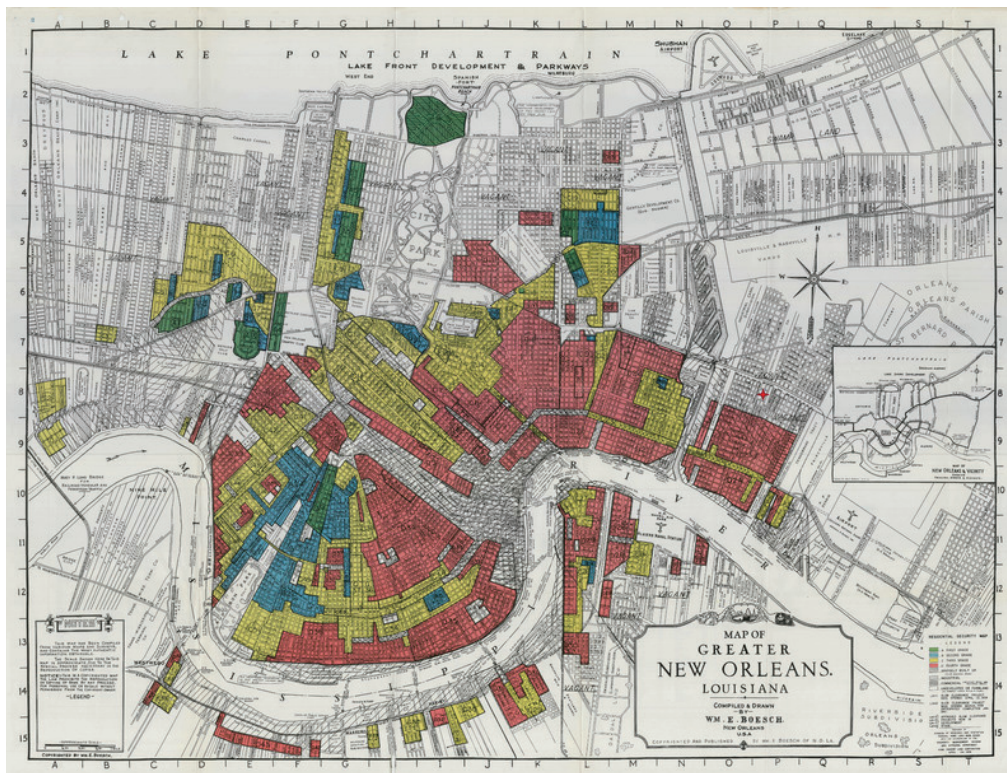
PLANNING SHOULD NOT REPLICATE PAST INJUSTICES.



For example: Coastal counties shaded gray have higher percentages of African Americans compared to the national average.

How to know which parts of your city or county are more at-risk?

One clue is to look at what areas were once red-lined as “hazardous” for investment, which resulted in poor healthcare, infrastructure, and food deserts. (For example, the map of New Orleans below.)



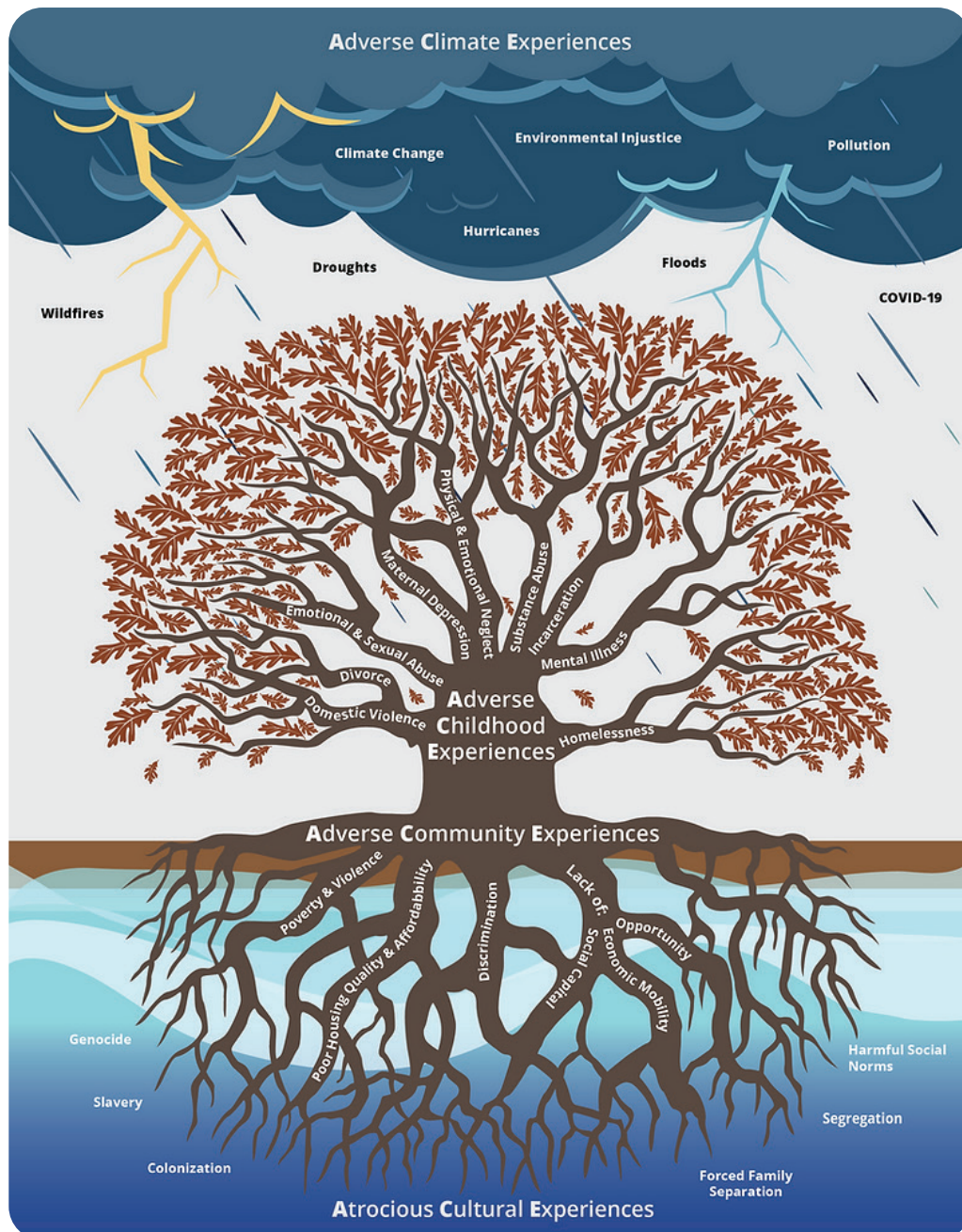
Redlining continues to have effects.

A 2023 working paper by the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, Va., found that neighborhoods that were redlined in the 1930s-1940s by the Home Owners' Loan Corporation face disproportionately higher risks of both current and future flooding and extreme heat.

USE TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

Your team needs people who understand how the ACEs impact people's lives and can help you develop Trauma Informed Strategies:

- ▶ Adverse Climate Experiences
- ▶ Adverse Childhood Experiences
- ▶ Adverse Cultural Experiences



TAKING ACTION

- ▶ Become familiar with players, issues, and resources.
- ▶ Assess your situation
- ▶ Identify action steps

What do you need to do to be ready to participate in the conversation?

- ▶ Learn about adaptation & the jargon of adaptation professionals.
- ▶ Understand intersectionality and trauma-informed strategies
- ▶ Identify players

What information do you need to gather and which people would need to be in the conversation in order to learn –

- ▶ What is your risk?
- ▶ What are the stories people tell about past disasters?
- ▶ What is your situation? (migrating to/migrating from)
- ▶ What culture/ traditions are valued?
- ▶ What culture/traditions can be activated or shared to strengthen a community?

Identify and connect with the players

- ▶ What State and Federal agencies are addressing environmental change in your area?
- ▶ What non-profits are involved with climate adaptation?
- ▶ What non-profits are involved with cultural preservation?
- ▶ What private sector entities are involved?

ACTIVITY– MAKING A START

Use the Plan-to-Plan Worksheet in order to gather information and resources you need to develop your own blueprint for how to activate culture as a resource in your community and how to effectively participate in the environmental change conversation with planners and specialists.

Migration and Receiving Communities

A Plan to Plan Worksheet

Maida Owens, Louisiana Division of the Arts Folklife Program, October, 2024

1. BECOME FAMILIAR WITH PLAYERS, ISSUES, AND RESOURCES

Become familiar with environmental planning agencies in my state.

Which state agencies address environmental changes? Does my state have a plan?

What Federal agencies are active in my state that are involved with environmental change?

US Environmental Protection Agency

US Fish and Wildlife Service

USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service

NOAA- National Weather Service, National Marine Fisheries Service

US Army Corps of Engineers

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Office of Environment, Social Sciences Unit

Are there any Sea Grant Universities or National Estuary Programs in my state?

Is culture and other aspects of the human dimension addressed in planning in my state?

Does the arts and culture network participate in my state's community resilience conversation?

Does my state address migration?

Does my state rely on mass migration (those who can leave, do)? Does it try to retain the young and the middle class which are more likely to leave stressed environments?

Is my state talking about managed retreat/assisted relocation or providing voluntary buyouts?

Identify non-profits that are involved with climate adaptation and include them in your planning.

Get involved with my planning commission.

Connect with the agency(s) or organization(s) that provide refugee resettlement and/or immigration services.

Become familiar with these issues.

Use multiple viewpoints and be aware of the past.

Trauma Informed Care

Become familiar with these resources.

Bridging Divides, Creating Community: Arts, Culture, and Immigration

Building Cohesive Communities in an Era of Migration and Change / Welcoming America

Certified Welcoming / Welcoming America

Art of Community: Creativity at the Crossroads of Immigrant Cultures and Society Services

Lead with Listening: A Guidebook on Community Conversations on Climate / Climigration Network

2. ASSESS MY SITUATION

Identify the environmental changes that impact my community.

___ Sea level rise, ___ drought, ___ wildfires, ___ extreme heat, ___ extreme precipitation,

___ storms/tornadoes, ___ flooding, ___ thawing permafrost

How will the predicted economic changes affect my community?

___ workforce changes, ___ remote work, ___ changes to tax base

Identify the relocation issues for my community.

Will my community be a sending or receiving community? Or both?

Determine my community's level of environmental risk.

Is my community at ___ high risk, ___ medium risk, or ___ low risk?

Determine the demographic issues that will affect planning.

Is my area increasing or decreasing in population now? What's predicted?

How densely populated is my area? Is there room for newcomers?

How easily can my community adapt to urban, suburban or rural newcomers?

What are my demographics for poverty and elderly and how will that affect planning?

Determine how my economy will be affected by the coming economic changes.

If I am on a coast, is it a recreational or working coast?

Is it high or low carbon-intensive?

What are the workforce skills of those likely to migrate to my community?

Determine the cultural issues that will impact migration in my community.

Are people more likely to move to the next higher ground? Or move farther away?

Have residents lived in my area for generations? Or have they more recently arrived?

Will my community receive people who have had to change ecosystems? Are they tied to their community's land and water? Will they face food insecurity because they lived off the land?

Determine whether my community is prepared to receive newcomers.

Am I familiar with creative economy research and creative placemaking strategies?

Am I familiar with artist community engagement projects?

Do I partner with my arts council?

Do I know artists who do community engagement projects?

Have I connected with people trained to facilitate conversations about climate migration and relocating?

Have I connected with trauma informed care professionals?

Have I connected with people trained to discuss intersectionality to help me not replicate injustices of the past?

3. IDENTIFY ACTION STEPS

You are now ready to develop an action plan for your community.

Resources

Bayou Culture Collaborative/Louisiana Folklore Society, <http://www.louisianafolklore.org>

Bayou Culture Collaborative /Louisiana Division of the Arts Folklife Program, www.louisianafolklife.org/bayouculture

Arts, Culture, and Climate Migration Resource List,
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1BvVy5XoM7UOuiJL6inyJX4fXASOkzJhyh3QiSvqjcw8/edit?usp=sharing>

Arts, Culture, and Environmental Migration Resource List

Compiled by Maida Owens

Bayou Culture Collaborative, 5/15/2025, Maidaowens@gmail.com

CLIMATE MIGRATION

American Society of Adaptation Professionals. <https://adaptationprofessionals.org/>

- Peer Learning Groups include Climate Migration and Managed Retreat; Community Adaptation Learning Exchange

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Climate Mapping for Resilience and Adaptation, Climate-related hazards in the US in real-time. Current and future assessments of wildfire, drought, inland flooding, coastal flooding, extreme heat
<https://resilience.climate.gov/>

Climate Resilience Toolkit. 2014. [Guidelines for Considering Traditional Knowledges in Climate Change Initiatives](#)

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Shows that patterns in Louisiana of moving close by are typical of other areas.

[When homes flood, who retreats and to where? We mapped thousands of FEMA buyouts and found distance and race play a role \(theconversation.com\)](https://theconversation.com/when-homes-flood-who-retreats-and-to-where-we-mapped-thousands-of-fema-buyouts-and-found-distance-and-race-play-a-role)

The study: Managed retreat: a nationwide study of the local, racially segmented resettlement of homeowners from rising flood risks.

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<https://adaptation.ei.columbia.edu/content/what-point-managed-retreat-resilience-building-coastal-zone>

Earth Institute Climate Adaptation Initiative. 2021. *At What Point Managed Retreat? Resilience, Relocation, and Climate Justice* <https://adaptation.ei.columbia.edu/content/2021-conference-homepage>

Earth Institute Climate Adaptation Initiative. 2023. *At What Point Managed Retreat? Habitability and Mobility in an Era of Climate Change* <https://adaptation.ei.columbia.edu/managed-retreat-2023>

Earth Institute YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/EarthInstitute/videos>

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Shows that patterns in Louisiana of moving close by are typical of other areas.

[When homes flood, who retreats and to where? We mapped thousands of FEMA buyouts and found distance and race play a role \(theconversation.com\)](https://theconversation.com/when-homes-flood-who-retreats-and-to-where-we-mapped-thousands-of-fema-buyouts-and-found-distance-and-race-play-a-role)

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Hauer, Mathew. 2017. Migration induced by sea-level rise could reshape the US population landscape. *Nature Climate Change Letters*. April 17. <https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3271>.

- Figure 2. Net change in population due to sea-level rise under the 1.8 m scenario and no adaptation.
- Figure 3. Circular plot of bi-lateral SLR migration flows for US States

Hauer, Mathew E., Sunshine A Jacobs, and Scott A. Kulp. 2024. [Climate migration amplifies demographic change and population aging | PNAS](https://www.pnas.org/doi/10.1073/pnas.2206192119). January 8, 2024. <https://www.pnas.org/doi/10.1073/pnas.2206192119>

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Ecosystem for Peace - A compendium of ideas.

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- See graphic of migration patterns

Southern Climate Impacts Planning Program (SCIPP) (NOAA). 2024 Simple Planning Tool. A dashboard to access many tools about climate hazards.

<https://www.southernclimate.org/resources/tools/simple-planning-tool/>

- See webinar introduction here: <https://youtu.be/siTrfwqWH8c>

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qGeffchmWU8>.

Certified Welcoming, <https://welcomingamerica.org/initiatives/certified-welcoming/>

CLIMATE AND MENTAL HEALTH

Climate Mental Health Network, <https://www.climatementalhealth.net/>

How to talk to Young People about Climate Emotions, a free resource for parents and caregivers.

Tips and Resources in English and en Espanol.

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<https://fullframeinitiative.org/learn/our-core-concepts/>
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CLIMATE AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Heritage Emergency National Task Force (HENTF) - FEMA and the Smithsonian Institution, and 60 national service organizations and federal agencies. , <https://culturalrescue.si.edu/hentf/>
Smithsonian Culture Rescue Initiative. <https://culturalrescue.si.edu/>

National Coalition for Arts Preparedness and Emergency Response (NCAPER). <https://www.ncaper.org/>
a voluntary task force of national, regional, state, and local arts organizations, public agencies, and foundations.

ARTS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

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- Includes section on the climate diaspora and “the arts role in easing the integration of displace people”
- page 127: The arts, as a vehicle for making science and policy both digestible and effective, will be instrumental in understanding both what is happening and how it is changing us and our world. They are our best coping strategy, whatever else happens.

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- Chapter 6: Metrics and Measurement.

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- Features Louisiana artist/biologist Brandon Ballengee
- “The metrics used by many in the environmental sector to inform decisions and measure impact are not capturing the value that the arts and culture provide.”

International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA). 2014. *The Arts and Environmental Sustainability*. <http://media.ifacca.org/files/DArt34b.pdf>

- Survey of international efforts.

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2025. Science and Art Collaborations: Engaging Gulf Communities in Understanding and Addressing Complex Environmental Issues: Proceedings of a Workshop—in Brief. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. doi: 10.17226/29062. Panel 3: Storytelling and Community, Bayou Culture Collaborative, Maida Owens. <https://nap.nationalacademies.org/read/29062/chapter/1>

National Sea Grant. 2018. *Traditional and Local Knowledge: A Vision for the Sea Grant Network*.

<https://alaskaseagrant.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Traditional-and-Local-Knowledge-A-vision-for-the-Sea-Grant-Network.pdf>

- Offers best practices for working with local communities about TLK

Neumark, Devora, and Stephanie Acker. Nov 2, 2023. [Making Home Beautiful: An Underestimated Approach to Coping with Climate-Induced Displacement \(youtube.com\)](#) NH Healthcare Workers for Climate Action.

LOUISIANA STATE AGENCIES & RESOURCES

Building Cross-Government and State Wide Resilience,

<https://gov.louisiana.gov/page/building-crossgovernment-and-state-wide-resilience>

Louisiana Chief Resilience Officer, Resilience Task Force videos, meetings.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAFHfp2a19xIY851YHJExg>

Louisiana Coastal Master Plan 2013, <https://coastal.la.gov/our-plan/2023-coastal-master-plan/>

Louisiana Watershed Initiative, <https://watershed.la.gov/>

2023 Statewide Resilience Annual Report.

<https://resilience.la.gov/media/5o0lgdlt/statewide-resilience-report-final.pdf>

Louisiana Climate Action Plan https://infrastructure.la.gov/media/l4cpshqj/pcap-final_with-appendices.pdf

Office of Community Development Disaster Recovery Unit. 2018. *LASAFE: Louisiana's Strategic Adaptations for Future Environments*. <https://lasafe.la.gov/>

- Executive summary, page 8-9.
- Recommendations summary, page 10-11.
- GOALS, page 142.

Goal 5: Support Healthy Communities, Regional Culture, and Recreational Access to Nature. Strategy 2: Preserve and support Louisiana's culture and heritage

BAYOU CULTURE COLLABORATIVE

Louisiana Folklore Society, <http://www.louisianafolklore.org>

- Bayou Culture Gatherings, youtube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6XX24FtEoSMZJgUt8TYaA>

Louisiana Folklife Program

Bayou Culture Collaborative, www.louisianafolklife.org/bayouculture

Past Workshops: <https://www.louisianafolklife.org/lfp/bayouproject.html#tab6>

Sense of Place and Loss Workshops online

- [Artists, Land Loss, and Climate Change](#), June 22, 2021
- [Climate Change, Migration, and Sustaining Louisiana's Culture](#), April 18, 2021

How to Make Community Quilted Wall Hanging,

https://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/BRExhibit_Quilt.pdf

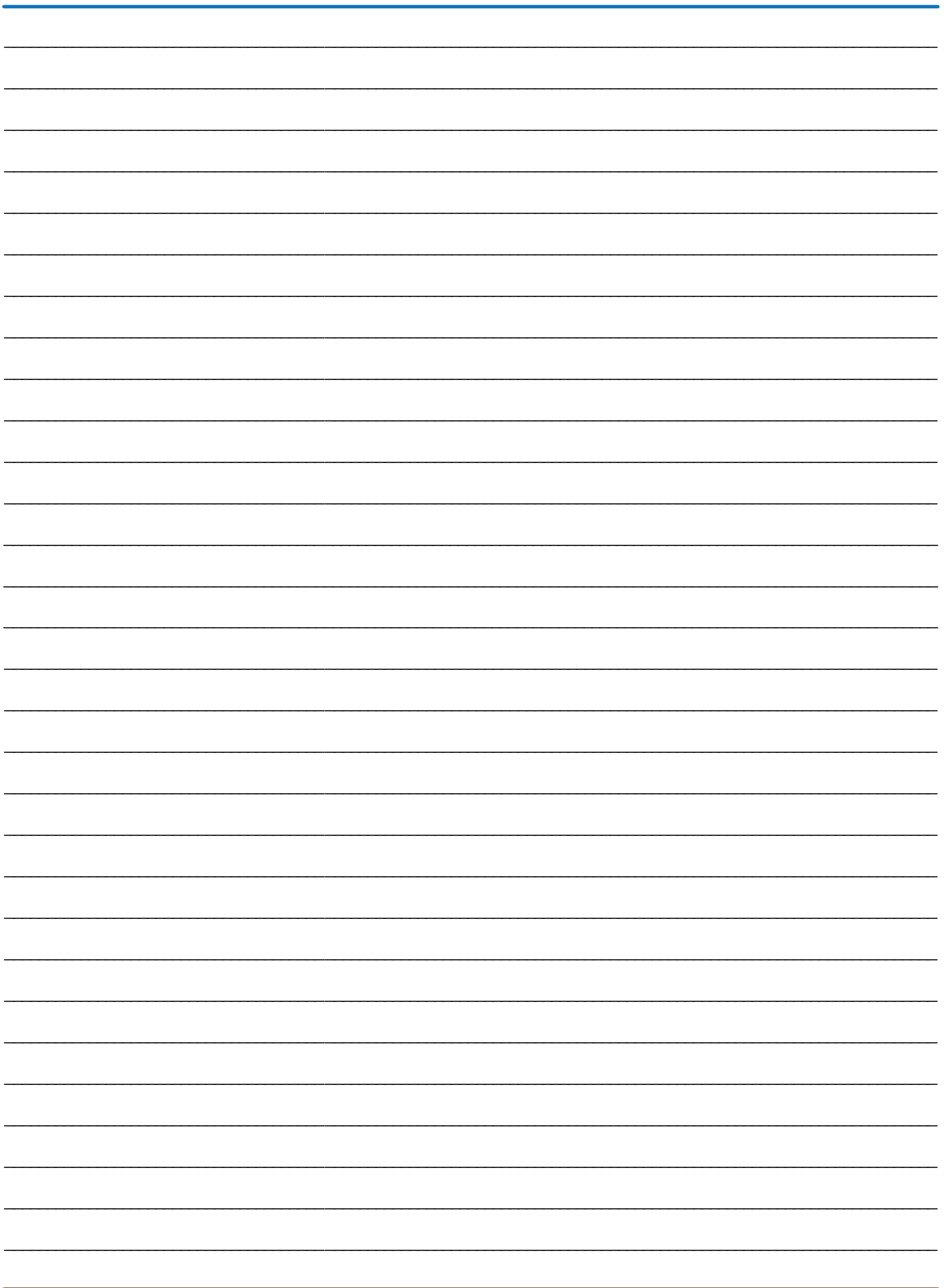
ARTIST RESOURCES

Culturalyst- a shared digital infrastructure for cultural communities. Culturalyst.com,

<https://www.facebook.com/Culturalyst/>

For a more inclusive list of resources, see **BCC Land Loss and Culture Reading List**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/14xsIP9KwSEvR-MaPUms2AgXSeRRlhkd6LumUyr1NvkU/edit?usp=sharing>



We connect those interested in the human dimension of land loss, transmitting culture in a time of disruption, and impacts of climate migrations.

WE OFFER
MONTHLY ONLINE GATHERINGS | WORKING GROUPS
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EVENTS | WORKSHOPS

We do not have all the answers nor support any one adaptation or management strategy. Together, we explore issues and options.

More information at
<https://slwdc.org/bayou-culture-collaborative>

Sign up for email announcements, Facebook and Instagram posts at
<https://slwdc.org/bayou-culture-collaborative>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Bayou Culture Collaborative /Louisiana Division of the Arts Folklife Program,
www.louisianafolklife.org/bayouculture

Arts, Culture, and Climate Migration Resource List,
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1BvVy5XoM7UOuiJL6inyJX4fXASOkzJhyh3QiSvqjcw8/edit?usp=sharing>

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