Climate change is intensifying the negative impacts of standard development practices and putting people and communities at risk. We need a new paradigm for building and enhancing communities that works in tandem with natural systems and considers the needs of all. To meet that goal, ASLA’s interdisciplinary Blue Ribbon Panel on Climate Change and Resilience identified the following core principles, key planning and design strategies, and public policies that will promote healthy, climate-smart, and resilient communities.

**Core Principles**
- Policies should be incentive-based wherever feasible.
- Policies should promote holistic planning and provide multiple benefits.
- Policies should address environmental justice, racial, and social equity issues.
- Policies should reflect meaningful community engagement.
- Policies should be regularly evaluated against performance measures and reviewed for unintended consequences.
- Policies should address broader regional goals and issues as well as local and site-specific concerns.

**Call to Action**
We can create more resilient and climate-smart communities by designing and planning in concert with natural systems, by applying transit-oriented development and smart growth strategies, and by addressing environmental justice and equity issues. The design and planning solutions outlined in this report are already being applied successfully in communities across the country. Our challenge is to put these approaches into practice as standard operating procedures for communities of all sizes and for all types of development. The policies recommended in this report will help provide the public policy framework needed to enable that transformation.

**Natural Systems**
Designing and planning in concert with natural systems promotes resilience, capitalizes on the multiple benefits provided by natural systems, and provides greater long-term return on investment than conventional development. Design and planning solutions must also address bioshell to ensure plant and animal communities remain resilient in the face of climate impacts.

**Solutions and Recommendations**
- Provide dedicated funding for green stormwater infrastructure.
- Require new development to retain stormwater on site.
- Incentivize planting of locally/regionaly appropriate and biodiveristy-supporting vegetation; require planting of pollinator-friendly vegetation on public lands.
- Protect and enhance natural vegetative buffers, including wetlands and water’s edge plantings along coastlines and inland waterways.
- Prioritize retention and expansion of green space, address inequities in access to open space and recreation.
- Adopt a national urban and suburban tree planting strategy to preserve and expand tree canopy.
- Promote or require water conservation and water reuse technologies.
- Adopt a national water strategy to protect critical water sources.
- Incentivize healthy soil management practices.
- Preserve wetlands.
- Assess climate change risks to biodiversity and promote greenways and biocorridors for plant and animal migration.

**Transportation**
Transportation must be considered through multiple lenses: as critical connections from homes to jobs, amenities, and essential services; as a major source of greenhouse gas emissions; and as a contributor to or detractor from a community’s appearance and function. Planned and designed thoughtfully, transportation systems can promote resilience.

**Solutions and Recommendations**
- Require transit-oriented development, including affordable housing, with multimodal green and Complete Streets.
- Provide equitable access to transportation options including safe, connected sidewalks, bicycle, and transit routes.
- Antique, plan, and provide infrastructure to support electric vehicles and new transportation methods and technologies.
- Apply technologies and design strategies to achieve net-zero-carbon streets.
- Promote regional transportation planning and development.

**Agriculture**
At the same time that farmland is being lost to expanding development and sprawl, agricultural systems are being stressed by the effects of climate change and unsustainable farming practices. Current and future impacts on food production and security, including equitable access to healthy food options, must be addressed.

**Solutions and Recommendations**
- Preserve farmland and support local food production.
- Incentivize urban and suburban agriculture.
- Incentivize conservation agriculture that builds healthy soil, increases food’s nutritional value, and sequesters carbon.
- Encourage location of affordable healthy food sources/options in underserved areas.

**Smart Policies for a Changing Climate Report**
A Summary of the Report and Recommendations of the ASLA Blue Ribbon Panel on Climate Change and Resilience

**Recommendations In Brief**

- **Climate Ready East Boston**
  - Boston, Massachusetts
  - Stoss Landscape Urbanism
  - Image credit: Stoss Landscape Urbanism

- **South Cypress Creek and West Junction**
  - Shelby County, Tennessee
  - Sasak
  - Image credit: Sasaki

- **Vulnerable Communities**
  - Special attention must be paid to communities that are at special risk from the effects of climate change. These include communities located in coastal and inland floodplains as well as underserved and low-income communities.

- **The Steel Yard**
  - Providence, Rhode Island
  - Klopf Martin Design Group
  - Image credit: Klopf Martin Design Group / Christian Philippus Photography
  - ASLA 2012 Professional General Design Honor Award recipient.

- **West Florissant Avenue “Great Streets” Initiative**
  - St. Louis County, Missouri
  - SWT Design
  - Image credit: SWT Design

- **The ASLA Blue Ribbon Panel on Climate Change and Resilience**
  - Appalachian Cattle Company: Fischman, Inc.
  - ASLA Blue Ribbon Panel Members, Process, and Goals

- **Additional Information**
  - Smart Policies for a Changing Climate Report
  - ASLA Changing Climate Forum
  - Smart Policies for a Changing Climate Webpage
  - ASLA Blue Ribbon Panel Members, Process, and Goals

- **American Society of Landscape Architects**
  - www.asla.org/climatechange