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## **U.S. Green Building Council-L.A. Announces 'Building Resilience-L.A.' Empowering Building/Property Owners and Communities on a Joint Path to Resilience**

**Arup is Founding Sponsor of Initiative, Leads Technical Working Group**

***Building Resilience-L.A. Guide* to be Presented at Greenbuild 2016**

Feb. 17, 2016 (LOS ANGELES, CA) The [U.S. Green Building Council-Los Angeles](#) chapter (USGBC-LA), L.A.'s go-to organization for making a positive impact towards a more sustainable built environment, has launched the **Building Resilience-L.A.** initiative that will deliver a *Building Resilience-L.A. Guide*, along with a South Los Angeles model project, to be presented at the upcoming Greenbuild International Conference & Expo at the L.A. Convention Center in October.

Independent design and engineering firm Arup—a pioneer in resilience with its REDI system of seismic resilience and technical support of Rockefeller's 100 Resilient Cities program—is the Founding Sponsor of the initiative, and is leading its technical working group.

Heather Rosenberg, USGBC-LA's Director of [Building Resilience-L.A.](#), knows that "resilience" is a hot topic, but believes that people don't always understand what it really means. "Resilience is not an end state, but rather, a practice," she states. "We are very fortunate to have Arup so committed to helping push forward this initiative that addresses how the building industry and our neighborhoods can work together on creating resilient communities." While the initiative will focus first on Southern California, it will serve as a template for a broader national/international program.

"Resilience" can be defined, adds Rosenberg, as "the capacity of individuals, organizations and communities to adapt and thrive in the face of stressors and shocks. Shocks are the big events that keep emergency managers awake at night—major storms, earthquakes, tsunamis and other headline-grabbers. The stressors are what make us vulnerable to those shocks—crumbling infrastructure, degraded environments, public health issues, chronic unemployment, and poverty."

Disasters such as Hurricane Katrina and Superstorm Sandy demonstrated the interconnection of physical, social and economic systems. Recovery was determined not only by the built environment, but by the *social ties* of the community. People turn to organizations they trust. **Building Resilience-LA** aims to build on the relationship between buildings, organizations and communities in supporting ways that make business sense and support the public good—e.g. social equity, good jobs, public health as well as business continuity.

USGBC-LA, along with Arup and a diverse **Building Resilience-L.A. steering committee**, believe that building and property owners are well positioned to take a leadership role in enacting resiliency measures among those in their local built environment. Most resilience programs to date have focused on local government. **Building Resilience-LA** will leverage the *green building model* of creating market-based tools for buildings to bring the private sector to the table, something with which the green building movement has lots of experience. The goal is to provide incentive for projects to do the right thing.

USGBC-LA's *Building Resilience-LA Guide* will target those who want to incorporate resilience into their buildings' operations and maintenance. It will include a step-by-step process for evaluating risk, engaging with community and identifying strategies related to improving building performance, developing social capital, and strengthening business processes. It will also include a summary of strategies that might make sense for the diverse risks that our region faces.

States Rosenberg, "Resilience is more than being prepared for emergencies—it requires flexibility, durability, adaptability. It means understanding your risks and vulnerabilities, and creating the capacity (physically, socially and economically) to respond to change as it comes. It makes business sense to invest in your community."

Russell Fortmeyer, who leads sustainability for [Arup's](#) Los Angeles office, has been helping USGBC-LA frame the technical issues for the L.A. region since the start of the initiative. "The Building Resilience project responds to such a critical need in this region, which explains why our working group includes a rich, diverse set of stakeholders," says Fortmeyer. "We at Arup are happy to build on our multi-disciplinary resilience work from throughout the world to support this important effort."

As a local living example of the resilience process, USGBC-LA is working with community-focused organization SCOPE (<http://scopela.org/>) based in South Los Angeles, a chronically disadvantaged community. Along with USGBC National, Majora Carter and Associates, the LA Department of Water and Power, and City of Los Angeles partners, USGBC-LA is developing a training and incubation center focused on jobs that promote sustainability and resilience. The facility will provide a community gathering space, will demonstrate emerging technologies, and will serve as an emergency center for the community. Green building elements will include rainwater capture, energy efficiency and passive energy measures, as a starting point. With SCOPE's mission as a center for job and leadership training, it will be a leading example of resilience—combining emergency preparedness, social equity and green building.



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[USGBC-LA](#) Executive Director Dominique Hargreaves states, "USGBC-LA is the key resource for teaching those in the built environment about the benefits of resilience planning, and guiding them through both the technical and social equity aspects. And as a supporting organization of the City of Los Angeles' 100 Resilient Cities program, we are thrilled that Mayor Eric Garcetti sees the **Building Resilience-L.A** program—which is housed at the new LA Cleantech Incubator La Kretz Innovation Campus—as a program that will help achieve many of the goals laid out in his office's *Sustainability pLAN*."

To sponsor the **Building Resilience-L.A.** initiative, please contact Dominique Hargreaves at [dominique@usgbc-la.org](mailto:dominique@usgbc-la.org) or 213-689-9707.

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**About U.S. Green Building Council-Los Angeles**

USGBC-LA is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization committed to creating a prosperous and sustainable future within one generation. Our mission promotes sustainability in LA County's built environment by delivering access to knowledge, resources, recognition and networking. ([www.usgbc-la.org](http://www.usgbc-la.org))