



Tishman Environment
and Design Center



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Tishman Center Proud to Announce Joel Towers and Ana Baptista's role on the NPCC

ANNALS *of* THE NEW YORK ACADEMY OF SCIENCES



New York faces severe challenges posed by climate change including dangerous heat waves and flooding from sea-level rise. The [New York City Panel on Climate Change \(NPCC\)](#), founded in 2009, is an independent group that assesses climate and environmental risks to NYC and recommends changes in an advisory report, much like the United Nations' [Intergovernmental Panel on](#)

[Climate Change \(IPCC\)](#). For over a decade now, the city's leaders have worked to build resilience and adaptation plans and have invested in preparing our infrastructure to address these issues, however there is much more that needs to be done especially in regards to equitable planning that prioritizes communities with the greatest risks and legacies of environmental injustice. For the next report, we at the Tishman Center are very excited to announce that two members of the center have received the honor to be included in the panel for the NPCC 2023 report: Professor [Joel Towers](#) and [Dr. Ana Baptista](#). They are joined by New School colleague [Dr. Timon McPhearson](#).

Joel Towers (University Professor of Architecture and Sustainable Design at Parsons and Director of the Tishman Center) is serving as one of the NPCC co-chairs with four other members. As the only practitioner and architect on the panel, Joel Towers offers a practice-based perspective. One of the co-chair duties is to guide the framing of the priorities for the next report. NPCC is committed to centering environmental justice in the 2023 report and continuing the work started in NPCC 3 (2019). Regarding his position, Joel says, "It is an honor to do this work. We're all trying to

contribute to the city. And the reports are well received by the City [government] even when we focus on the issues that have no easy answers.”



Dr. Ana Baptista (Assistant Professor of Professional Practice at the Milano School and Associate Director at the Tishman Center) is co-leading the Equity working group. They are responsible for outlining goals and metrics for equity-based projects, such as climate related displacement. Regarding the other members on the panel, Ana adds: “Working with leaders in the field of environmental justice like Sheila Foster [Equity group co-leader] is really a privilege and the NPCC

membership this year is very interdisciplinary and committed to embedding equity and justice principles in the way they work and in the reports produced as well - which is an exciting evolution of the NPCC.”

There have been four reports published since the start of the NPCC: 2010, 2013, 2015, and 2019. The first report focused on projections for extreme weather events and adaptation plans for NYC’s infrastructure. The second report, following Hurricane Sandy, put a strong emphasis on predictive flood maps. The third report continued the topics of the first two but added public health due to the strong correlation between climate change and health issues. The fourth report added equity as an important topic, recognizing environmental injustice in our city. As these reports continue to evolve, the city’s government can make better decisions that explicitly address environmental justice issues. This will be significantly advanced by the new Environmental Justice Advisory Board. Chaired by [Peggy Shephard](#) the EJAB is the result of [local laws signed in 2017](#) and provides critical partnership opportunities for NPCC in its work.

Projected flooding for New York City

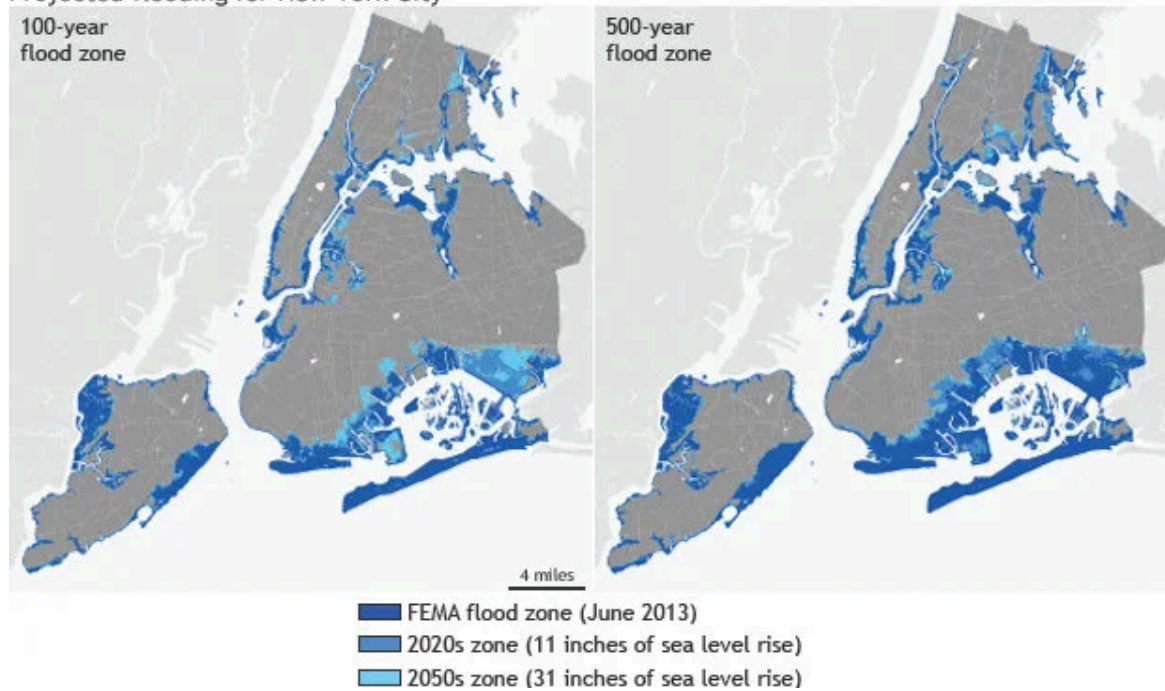


image courtesy of <https://www.climate.gov/news-features/featured-images/future-flood-zones-new-york-city>

In addition to the five co-chairs, the Mayor also appoints 15 additional panel members. The full panel as well as additional research fellows and external experts comprise six working groups for the current NPCC:

- Futures and Transitions
- Equity
- Flooding
- Health
- Climate Science and Projections
- Shared Methods and Cross Cutting Issues (sharing information with other regional chapters and dealing with cross-boundary issues like NJ-NY collaborations)

The Tishman Environment and Design Center is proud to have Ana and Joel represent the Center and The New School on the NPCC and we look forward to seeing their contributions in the 2023 NPCC report. Read more about the NPCC [here](#).



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