

# SURAKSHA BHANDARI

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## Professional Summary

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Focused in developing disaster recovery and mitigation plans, post-disaster assessments, and wildfire adaptation strategies. Skilled in GIS, remote sensing, and spatial data analytics, with a focus on integrating resilience into urban and regional planning.

## Education

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<b>MCMP: City and Metropolitan Planning</b>	<b>University of Utah</b> - Salt Lake City, Utah	<b>May 2025</b>
<b>MSc: Disaster Risk Management</b>	<b>Tribhuvan University, IOE-</b> Kathmandu, Nepal	<b>Aug 2022</b>
<b>Bachelors in Architecture</b>	<b>Tribhuvan University, IOE –</b> Kathmandu, Nepal	<b>Oct 2017</b>

## Software Skills

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- **Design & Visualization:** InDesign, Illustrator, AutoCAD, Autodesk Revit, Lumion, Google SketchUp, Photoshop
- **Mapping & Spatial Analysis:** QGIS, ArcGIS, ArcMap, SNAP, SPSS, Google Earth
- **Others:** MS Office

## Work Experience

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**Professional Planner** **Dec 2025 - Current**  
**City of Springfield** –Springfield, Illinois

- Conducted research and data analysis to support planning proposals and policy recommendations.

**Intern Urban Planner** **June 2025 – Nov 2025**  
**VCBO** – Salt Lake City, Utah

- Conducted a feasibility study, evaluation of potential sites based on accessibility and infrastructure, stakeholder’s engagement including seniors and community leaders, and supporting community outreach campaign

**Graduate Research and Teaching Assistant** **Aug 2023 – May 2025**  
**University of Utah** – Salt Lake City, Utah

- Developed strategies to integrate land use planning into Wildfire Recovery efforts in the Western United States, recognized by the Natural Hazards Center's Weather Ready Research initiative (June 3, 2024).
- Conducted a comprehensive analysis of land use-based Wildfire Adaptation strategies in unincorporated regions of wildfire-prone U.S. states, identifying effective practices to enhance community resilience.
- Researched on design and implementation of a framework for integrating energy and wildfire resilience across scales, addressing critical gaps in knowledge and implementation.
- Led lab sessions, office hours, and graded assignments for the undergraduate Design Ecology course.

**Professional project:** Developing Utah Catastrophic Housing Plan. Client: Utah Division of Emergency Management, Recovery Section

## Architect and Planner

Jul 2020 – Sep 2022

The Archilab Pvt. Ltd.– Kathmandu, Nepal

- Led the design and execution of 15+ residential and commercial housing projects, including detailed feasibility studies, and cost estimations.
- Contributed to master plan development for new local governments, focusing on sustainable urban development, infrastructure, housing, and economic improvement in underserved areas.

## Publications

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- **Bhandari, S.**, Motra, G. B., & Shrestha, K. C. (2022). Problems in Residential Space facing Occupancy Change and Developing a Template for Qualitative Risk Assessment: A Case Study of Butwal City. *Journal of the Institute of Engineering*

## Symposium Presentation and Posters

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- Isaba, T., Chandrasekhar, D., **Bhandari, S.**, & Loquellano, A. (2024). *Land Use Based Wildfire Planning for Unincorporated Communities*. Poster presented at the 2024 WIRED Grid Resilience Symposium, September 12, University of Utah
- Chandrasekhar, D., **Bhandari, S.**, Isaba, T., & Borhani, M. (2024). *Integrating Energy & Wildfire Resilience across Scales: Gaps in Knowledge and Implementation*. Poster presented at the 2024 WIRED Grid Resilience Symposium, September 12, University of Utah
- **Bhandari, S.**, Chandrasekhar, D., Isaba, T., Finn, D., & Loquellano, A. (2024). *Land Use Based Wildfire Planning for Unincorporated Communities: An Analysis of Community Wildfire Protection Plans in the Western US*. Poster presented at the 2024 Environment & Sustainability Research Symposium held in conjunction with The Wilkes Center for Climate Science & Policy Summit, University of Utah

## Leadership and Awards

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General Secretary: NSA, University of Utah (2024-2025)	Executive Member: Nepalese Association of Utah (2024)
Grant - Global Change & Sustainability Center, UofU	Weather Ready Research Award - Natural Hazards Center
Member, Post-Earthquake Rapid Visual Damage Assessments-assessed structural damage, support recovery (Gorkha-EQ, 2015)	