Another amazing Vancouver summer is well underway: English Bay, from Spanish Banks to Third Beach is lined with smiling sunbathers from noon to dusk; Robson Square has been converted back to its annual car-free state with Viva Vancouver’s Corduroy Road providing seating and shade for passersby; and students and faculty are involved in an array of programs abroad, local summer courses, research initiatives, and internships. A number of SCARPies are working with the City of Vancouver through the Greenest City Scholar program and other initiatives:

Zak Bennett is busy as a Greenest City Scholar involved with Strategic Transportation Planning looking transit expansion over the past few decades with an eye on how Vancouver compares with its peer cities.

Daniel Iwama and Jeremy Stone are conducting an affordability study of retail locations in the Historic Japantown neighbourhood and Downtown Eastside Oppenheimer District. The research project will assess the effectiveness of the City of Vancouver’s retail continuity policy in maintaining a low-income serving retail fabric in the Downtown Eastside through a period

Continued on page 2
of rapid industrial and demographic change.

**Karla Kloepper** is conducting research with the Central Area Planning team to better understand the development opportunities and constraints in the laneways in Vancouver's West End. Part of the West End Local Area Plan Laneways 2.0 initiative, this research considers both social and physical dimensions, and explores alternatives for both public right-of-ways and private development sites.

Greenest City Scholar **Niall McGarvey** is involved with the efforts to daylight China Creek, a long-buried waterway that once flowed from East Vancouver west towards False Creek. Daylighting and restoration efforts have the potential to enhance parks, water quality, and add potential habitat for salmon.

**Carmut Me**, with the City’s Downtown Eastside Planning Group, is focusing on local economic development. The project will develop a survey in collaboration with the four DTES Business Improvement Associations and its anticipated that the survey results will provide insight into the challenges and opportunities for economic development and revitalization in the area.

**Annie Merritt**’s Greenest City project is aimed at ways of addressing waste contamination from these events. Her pilot project will measure the reduction in waste contamination that results from the presence of waste station monitors who are able to assist with sorting waste and will include Best Practices recommendations.

Building on her previous city activities, **Katie O’Callaghan** will be working as a planning assistant on the Integrated Graffiti Management Program and lending a hand with stakeholder engagement on Public Bike Share. This includes building a partnership program with the Downtown Community Court to have participants remove graffiti.

Greenest City Scholar **Ryan O’Connor**’s project considers the challenges and opportunities of creating a unified pedestrian plaza at 800-block Robson. Working on behalf of Viva Vancouver, he has compiled case studies and guidelines to help inform the City as they consider creating a truly pedestrian space in the heart of Vancouver.

**George Poulos** is developing the City of Vancouver Active Transportation Promotions and Enabling Strategy. This will be a comprehensive marketing and promotional strategy encouraging Vancouver residents to walk and cycle, complementing the city’s growing walk/cycle infrastructure.

**Erin Rennie**, another Greenest City Scholar, is indulging her love of municipal solid waste management through an assignment with the Vancouver Police Department. Erin’s research involves developing a change management strategy to help VPD officers and staff adjust to zero waste and anti-idling policies for police vehicles.

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**SCARP is on Social Media!**

Follow us on twitter at [@ubcscarp](https://twitter.com/ubcscarp), and Like our Facebook page at [facebook.com/ubcscarp](https://facebook.com/ubcscarp) for the latest updates from the school and discussions on current planning issues!
Karen Zeller: Project and Financial Administrator Par Excellence

By Leonora Angeles, Associate Professor

Karen Zeller, long-time Centre for Human Settlements (CHS) Administrator for SCARP, took early retirement on June 30, 2013. Her presence, administrative skills, and dedicated service will be sadly missed by many, particularly SCARP-CHS faculty, staff, and graduate student researchers who worked closely with Karen over the years.

Karen became CHS Administrative Secretary, her first job at UBC, in 1990. She worked closely with Professor Emeritus Aprodicio Laquian, CHS Director, in a $5.8 million research project funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). The project covered six cities in four Asian countries, and was followed by three more grants worth about $1.5 million – two from CIDA and another from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) between 1991-1999. Karen was also the Project Administrator on three more CIDA-funded projects with a total of $9.3 million in funding, led by Professor Emeritus Peter Boothroyd: Localized Poverty Reduction in Vietnam (1998-2003), the Community-Based Watershed Management in Sao Paulo (1998-2003), and New Public Consortia for Metropolitan Governance in Brazil (2006 to 2010). In all projects, Karen joined the multi-disciplinary teams from UBC, with local, national and international partners – from the proposal development and submission stage to managing each project’s complicated finances and communications within and beyond UBC.

At a joint retirement party hosted by SCARP-CHS for Karen and Erika de Castro, another SCARP-CHS staff, Karen’s husband Allan shared vignettes in Karen’s life from her inherited ethics and meticulous attention to detail from her father, a former lawyer in Ontario, to her business-related travels abroad. We’re told she was known to international partners as “Queen Karen,” powerful finance officer who held millions in cash of the local currency for payment or reimbursement, according of course to the strict financial regulations of funding agencies.

Karen, you will be truly missed in our hearts and on the second floor of West Mall Annex!
The Planning Evaluation Lab
By Mark Stevens, Assistant Professor

Dear SCARP students, faculty, staff, and other Newsbytes subscribers – By the time you are reading this issue of Newsbytes, the Planning Evaluation Lab (PEL) will have officially opened its virtual doors and I will have officially assumed my position as director of the lab. I am very excited to be establishing this new lab, and I envision that it will make a positive contribution to knowledge creation and dissemination at SCARP and beyond.

Research activities conducted at the PEL will focus on the effectiveness of the municipal government land use planning function. Current and future projects will involve evaluating the content and quality of municipal official community plans and related documents, examining whether and to what extent plans and policies are implemented, and exploring the role that planners play in helping to achieve plan goals. The overarching goal of work conducted at the PEL will be to foster more effective land use planning that promotes sustainable development goals at the municipal level.

In addition to engaging research affiliates at UBC and other universities, I also intend to engage SCARP graduate students in PEL research projects and activities. With this in mind, if you are a current or prospective SCARP graduate student you may wish to be on your best behavior when I’m around…

Special thanks to SCARP faculty member Tim McDaniels for encouraging me to establish a lab to house my research activities at SCARP, and special thanks to SCARP masters student Robert White for creating the PEL website, which you can access at http://www.planningevaluationlab.ca.
Welcome Back Dr. Penny Gurstein

This spring Dr. Eric Hall, Dean pro tem, Faculty of Applied Science, made an exciting announcement:

“I am pleased to announce that Dr. Penny Gurstein’s appointment as Director of the School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP) at UBC has been extended for a second term. This appointment extension will be for a five-year term, effective July 1, 2013.”

Professor Gurstein, who completed her first five-year term as Director of SCARP in 2012, specializes in the socio-cultural aspects of community planning with particular emphasis on those who are the most marginalized in planning processes. Her research focuses on developing strategies and interventions that encourage diversity, equity and urban sustainability in the planning and design of communities.

“We are confident that, over the coming years, Dr. Gurstein will lead the School to further successes and I look forward to working with her in her continuing role as Director of SCARP. Thank you to the members of the Advisory Committee for their time and effort and to all of those who participated in the appointment extension process.”

SCARP would also like to thank Interim Director Stephanie Chang for taking on the extra responsibilities of Director during Dr. Gurstein’s leave, and ensuring SCARP continued to push ahead with plans and projects for the coming years. Thank you!

Spring 2013 Master’s Graduates

Ms. Erin Bett, MAP
Project: Fork to Screen: Engaging Youth in Food Systems Planning Through Digital Storytelling
Committee: Maged Senbel, Jonathan Frantz (Ear to the Ground)

Mr. Thomas Bevan, MAP
Project: Social Purpose Real Estate - Business Plan & Toolkit
Committee: Thomas Hutton, Michelle Fortin (Watari Research Association)

Mr. John Chapman, MAP
Project: Collaborative Experiments in New Ways of Living: Vancouver in the Post Post-Industrial Economy
Committee: Tom Hutton, Joji Kumagai (Strathcona Business Improvement Association)

Mr. Thomas Daley, MAP
Committee: Maged Senbel, Patricia St. Michel (City of Vancouver)

Ms. Erica Lay, MAP
Project: Evaluating Touch-Table Technology in Neighbourhood Design
Committee: Maged Senbel, John Guenther (City of Revelstoke)

Mr. Murray McKenzie, MAP
Thesis: (Re) Remembering the Inner City: Cultural Production, Reflexivity, and Vancouver’s Heritage Areas
Committee: Thomas Hutton, David Ley (UBC, Geography), Trevor Barnes (UBC, Geography)

Photo: Robert White
Spring 2013 Master’s graduates and award recipients.

Continued on page 7
Driving Up the Cost – A new perspective on affordability in Vancouver
By Lee Haber, MAP Candidate

To say affordability is an important issue in this region would be an understatement. Vancouver has been recognized as one of the least affordable cities in the world. However, just because we view something as important, that doesn’t mean we’re right about it. This is not to say that Vancouver is “affordable”. Instead, it is meant to highlight the importance of defining “affordability” more specifically and being more detailed as to those parts of the region that are affordable and those that are not.

When we think of affordability, we usually think solely about housing costs—a common threshold for which is spending less than 30% of income on housing. However, looking at housing costs alone leaves the false impression that it is more affordable to live in the suburbs where housing costs are generally lower. What is often overlooked, however, are the high transportation costs that go hand-in-hand with the low density living typical of suburban development. In most cases, these additional costs offset any savings in housing expenditures.

So when we think of affordability, we should really we should be thinking of housing AND transportation costs. This is what the Center for Neighbourhood Technology has done, having created a Housing and Transportation (H+T) Affordability Index that defines affordable as a household spending less than 45% of its earnings on housing and transportation.

For the past few months, I have been part of a group examining affordability in Greater Vancouver through this framework and creating a similar index using 2006 Census data and 2011 Translink Trip Diary data.

The initiative focused on a series of interrelated questions associated: how does our view of affordability change – or not – with this new definition of affordability? What areas in Metro Vancouver are the most (and least) affordable? What policies could make the biggest difference in improving affordability?

Continued on page 7
Before we touch upon these, however, we needed to determine how factoring transportation costs changes our view of affordability. Below is an map comparing the conventional definition of affordability with our new housing and transportation definition. (Yellow means affordable and blue means unaffordable.)

![Affordability comparison map.](image)

It is immediately apparent that our region is considerably less affordable when we factor in transportation costs. What is less apparent is that some census tracts in the City of Vancouver became affordable with our new definition. Overall though, our region is significantly less affordable than we think it is. A scary thought.

![Affordability change map.](image)

Based on our analysis, it is clear that Vancouver (proper) is more affordable than we think, but the region is much less affordable than we think. And

Ms. Benita Menezes, MAP
Thesis: Engaging the State: Urban Citizenship Practices at the Frontier of the Urban Renewal and Nagar Raj in Suburban Mumbai
Committee: John Friedmann, Adibin Kusno (UBC, Institute of Asian Research), Michael Leaf

Ms. Lindsay Neufeld, MAP
Project: Building a Healthy City for All: Exploring the Creation and Implementation of a Healthy Planning and Development Toolkit
Committee: Leonora Angeles, Ali Grant (City of Vancouver)

Mr. Matthew Rogers, MSCP
Project: The Rental Housing Supply Roundtable
Committee: Penny Gurstein, Jill Perron (Manitoba Housing & Community Development)

Ms. Mirala Shtull, MAP
Project: Sea Level Rise Adaptation: Considering Rapid Climate Change and Limits to Economic Growth
Committee: William Rees, Tamsin Mills (City of Vancouver Sustainability Group)

Ms. Jessie Singer, MAP
Committee: Leonora Angeles, Jeff Ragsdale (Village of Burns Lake)

Ms. Qiu Ning (Maggie) Wang, MAP
Project: A Shrinking Path for Bicycles: A Historical Review of Bicycle Use in Beijing
Committee: Jinhua Zhao, John Friedmann

the main culprit is transportation costs (Yellow is <15% of household income)

On the Transportation costs map on the following page, notice the sliver of yellow following the Expo Line.

Continued on page 8
Given the above, where does affordability lie?

The most affordable areas in the region were found to be the West End and Metrotown, whereas the least were found at the periphery in Surrey, Coquitlam, Port Moody and West Vancouver.

As one would guess, areas that are walkable, centrally-located and have good access to transit are much more affordable than those that are car-oriented and where land uses are segregated.

How do we make Metro Vancouver more affordable?

Based on the research—and counter to popular belief—the areas that should be the focus of affordability improvements are those that are unaffordable when both housing and transportation costs are considered and where people are experiencing it. Reducing living expenses is often not a priority for the wealthy population, for example.

The image to the right is a plot of all the census tracts in Metro Vancouver based on actual affordability and experienced affordability. We calculated experienced affordability by using the income of local residents instead of for the whole region. The dividing line for both axes is the 45% affordability threshold. Overall, the ‘cloud’ appears centred with many areas on both sides of the affordability divide.

The area of greatest concern is the top right quadrant—these areas with very high housing and transportation costs, where the residents are spending more than 45% of their income on housing and transportation.

Continued on page 12
Pura Vida – Costa Rica Field Study
By Karla Kloepper, MAP Candidate

From May 7th to 18th 2013, ten students from SCARP and the Faulty of Forestry visited Costa Rica to learn about local ecosystem services, climate adaptation, and decision-making contexts in partnership with CATIE, the Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza.

The course began with a four-night stay at the CATIE campus in Turrialba, in the shadow of the Irazu volcano in the province of Cartago. We visited three different large and small-scale farms to compare the different organic and rainforest certification processes for coffee and food crop production, and visited the Birris watershed to learn how local farmers are managing climate-related changes to their local crop cycles. We also explored CATIE’s wonderful botanical gardens and extensive cacao collection, one of the largest and most important cacao repositories in the world.

From Turrialba, the field study continued to the La Selva Biological Station in Puerto Viejo de Sarapiqui, where we learned about the station’s extensive tropical ecological research agenda, renewed emphasis on community engagement and knowledge translation, and viewed some of the reserve’s countless plant and animal species (including deadly vipers, bullet ants and three-toed sloths!) We also learned about the active role indigenous communities are playing in Costa Rica’s REDD+ implementation strategies.

The Costa Rica Field Study Team (L to R): Maria Chernaya, Claudia Castro, Alvaro Marquez, Christa Brown, Karla Kloepper, Vanessa Marquez, Professor Tim McDaniels, Gabi Esser, Sandy Miller, Erin Rennie, Megan Ahearn.

Continued on page 10
After sampling the tropical delicacies at Finca Corsicana, the largest organic pineapple farm in the world, the field study continued on to the Nicoya peninsula on the Pacific coast. Here we learned about the challenges of water management and allocation in the Guanacaste province, and enjoyed the Monte Alto Reserva Natural, a deforested area in the Tempisque river watershed that was later reclaimed and rehabilitated by the community into a lush ecological reserve.

The field school finished with a well-deserved day at Playa Carrillo in the Nicoya Peninsula, where everyone tried their hand at boogie boarding and reflected on an amazing eleven days of information, discussion, and adventure. While we had to leave the pura vida life in Costa Rica, we’ll be fostering the lessons and friendships developed over the course of this field study well beyond our time at SCARP!

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**Jordi Honey-Rosés: Assistant Professor in Ecological Planning.**

*By Stephanie Chang, Professor*

I am delighted to announce the outcome of our faculty search: Dr. Jordi Honey-Rosés will be joining SCARP as our new assistant professor in Ecological Planning.

As some of you will recall from his interview, Jordi is a sustainability researcher who specializes in ecosystem services and their role in ecological planning. His research investigates how innovative institutional arrangements can improve ecosystem management and restoration. He received his Ph.D. in Regional Planning from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and holds undergraduate degrees from the University of California, Berkeley and a Masters in Public Policy from the Harvard Kennedy School. For nearly four years, he served as a Forest Conservation Officer with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) in Mexico. He recently completed a postdoctoral research appointment with the Catalan Institute for Water Research in Spain and is currently a postdoctoral fellow at the Universidad Nacional Autónomo de México (UNAM). Jordi will play an important role at SCARP in maintaining and further developing our traditional strength in environmental and natural resources planning.

Many thanks to everyone in the School who participated in the various aspects of the search process. On behalf of the SCARP faculty, I would like to convey special thanks to the student representatives on the Search Committee, Torill Gillespie (master’s) and Lily Yumagulova (Ph.D.), who dedicated an enormous amount of time and effort to this process. ✨
Chicago: Planning Capital
By Robert White, MScP Candidate

A few months ago immediately after the winter term ended, I hopped on a bus, skytrain, bus, LRT train, airport shuttle, and finally airplane to attend the 2013 APA National Planning Conference in Chicago. Having never visited the city, I was eager to explore the grand avenues of the Windy City, and see what knowledge could be shared amongst speakers and conference attendees.

Myself and a few other SCARPies enjoyed sessions on online community engagement, GIS, zoning for creating competitive cities, civic hacking, neighbourhood-based transportation plans, and visual communication techniques – which included a wonderful tech showcase on CityEngine which left me absolutely hypnotized.

Continued on page 13

Best Wishes, Jinhua Zhao!
By Lawrence Frank, Professor

To our colleague and friend Dr. Jinhua Zhao: The faculty, staff, and students in SCARP at UBC extend our best wishes to you in your new position at MIT and home in the Boston Region!

Jinhua, thank you for your contributions to SCARP over the past 3 years. You have helped to us build and strengthen our focus within transportation planning and across our entire program. Your participation has helped to raise the importance and benefits of having stronger connections across campus and helped us as we moved into Applied Science with your joint appointment between Civil Engineering and SCARP. Your work within transportation planning is evidence-based and has helped to raise the importance of being able to quantify and measure the impacts of policies on economic, environmental, and a range of quality of life outcomes within SCARP. Your passion for comparative work within China is instructive and has helped our students understand the sheer scale and global impacts of what happens in China -- and your research points to potentially creative ways to influence and encourage cross-fertilization of approaches to sustainable transportation between Chinese cities. We have no doubt that your work and career will continue to flourish -- and while we would greatly prefer that you stay, we believe that your interests and aspirations will also be well supported in your new academic home at MIT.

Looking towards the future - we offer strong interest in exploring ways to cultivate some joint collaborative initiatives between UBC and MIT in the area of sustainable transportation together.
‘Affordability’ from page 9

Though the entire ‘cloud’ appears to be centred around the threshold, it is not the case for different cities in the region. Here is Vancouver on the right, and you can see Surrey below it.

As one can see, Vancouver has only one census tract in our ‘Greatest Concern’ quadrant, whereas Surrey has approximately half of its census tracts within it. This clearly demonstrates that there is clear and pressing need for affordability improvements in Surrey and other suburbs such as Coquitlam, White Rock, Langley and Maple Ridge, where people are really experiencing a lack of affordability.

When it comes to improving affordability, improving transit and walkability in the suburbs makes a lot of sense. The Evergreen Line (contrary to what some believe) and Surrey Rapid Transit would greatly reduce transportation costs and improve affordability.

In conclusion, including transportation in the affordability equation makes it clear that it is the Urbs, not the Suburbs, that are truly affordable and that if we really want to improve affordability in Metro Vancouver, improving transit and creating a more walkable environment in places like Surrey would make the biggest difference.

If you are interested in reading more about our study, here is our Presentation and our Final Report.

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Actual vs. Experienced Affordability for Vancouver

Actual vs. Experienced Affordability for Surrey

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Gwa’lsala-’Nakwaxda’xw Good Parenting Aspirations

Photo: Aftab Erfan
Perhaps the most comprehensive and enlightening session was named “Emerging Trends: The Future of Planning” and was presented by Eugenie Birch, FAICP, Lawrence C. Nussdorf Chair of Urban Research and Education at the University of Pennsylvania. Birch led us through some of the key challenges facing planning in the US, and some of the major opportunities to pursue. Her talk was organized into five main themes: global scene, economy, demography, governance, and environment, through which she highlighted major challenges such as aging populations, changing energy sources, and declining infrastructure.

The session then transitioned into an open mic where attendees could share their own thoughts and visions for the future of planning. One question that stood out in my mind were where we as planners insert ourselves globally – since planning can often no longer be considered to have only local impacts, what is our role in the bigger picture?

At one point a planner provided an observation that in his experience, there was a lack of optimism in planning and a growing resignation to tackling the challenges ahead. Another audience member, a well-established architect and planner in his 90s, soon expressed his passion for the profession and his plans to continue as long as his hand could hold a pen. While inspiring, I wondered if this wasn’t directly related to the challenge of optimism – with students such as myself, bringing ideas and positivity, who may not be provided the space and opportunities to contribute those ideas due to delayed retirement of the boomers who aren’t ready to pass on their responsibilities (perhaps supported by the disproportionate number of mentors who signed up to meet young planners/students attending the conference for the first time). As long as we’re able to learn from, and work alongside our senior planners, I have confidence my generation of planners will bring not only optimism and positivity, but also a focused, multi-disciplinary mindset ready to dream big and help shape our communities for the better.

In the end, conference sessions and literature can only do so much. It’s my firm belief that regardless of whether or not we remain in academia or venture off into practice, we as planners have a duty to educate ourselves on the immensity of options for supporting the design, programming, and durability of our regions and communities – and one of the best ways to do that is to experience as many different communities, in as many different cultures as possible. Chicago, IL. Check.

**Awards & Recognition**

Congratulations to John Friedmann who was recently honoured by the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP) with the creation of the John Friedmann Award! The award will recognize exemplary scholarship in the area of planning sustainability, defined to include subject areas such as environment, urban design, health, transportation, disaster preparedness, urban or regional governance, or other areas critical to the sustainability of urban or regional places.

The announcement notes that “John Friedmann is a widely-recognized planning scholar with an exceptionally distinguished career. He has contributed in many ways to the field of urban and regional planning, through his writings on planning theory, regional development planning, and world cities. He is the author of 26 books and close to 200 articles, and has received many distinguished awards.” Congratulations John!

Congratulations also to Aftab Erfan, who was a finalist in SSHRC’s first ever “Research for a Better Life: The Storytellers” challenge. Aftab submitted the mural (a portion of which appears on pg. 12) co-created with Gwa’sala-Nakwaxda’xw nation. Well done Aftab!
NewsBytes is SCARP’s tri-annual newsletter highlighting current announcements, recent accomplishments, events, research, and broader planning movements of interest to staff, faculty, students, and alumni, as well as prospective students and members of the community.

If you have questions or comments, or an article you would like to see included in a future edition of NewsBytes, please contact Outreach Coordinator Robert White directly at scarp@rbtwhite.ca or @UBCscarp, or contact the School of Community And Regional Planning at the address provided above.