Winter 2016

SCARP
School of Community And Regional Planning
“Planners you came to change the world, don’t let your inner activist die down ever.”

Gill Penalosa, SCARP 2016 Symposium
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THE 8TH ANNUAL SCARP SYMPOSIUM

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2016
Great Hall, AMS Student Nest, 6133 University Blvd, UBC

Presented by the UBC School of Community & Regional Planning, the SCARP Symposium welcomes planning professionals, students and academics, and curious urbanists. PIBC members are eligible for 6.75 Professional Development credits.

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School of Community & Regional Planning
The University of British Columbia

Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris
Luskin School of Public Affairs
University of California, Los Angeles

Albert Pope
School of Architecture
Rice University

Kristina Hill
College of Environmental Design
University of California, Berkeley

Matt Hern
Co-Founder/Director
2+10 Industries, Vancouver

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UBC  a place of mind
THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
SCARP Welcomes New PSA Executive
Planning Students Association Roles for 2016

President: Lara Therrien Boulos
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Administrator: Cail Smith
Orientation Coordinators: Amy McDonald, Aylin Tavakoli
Equity Coordinator(s): Jessica Hayes, Sarah Marshall, Hollie Renee
Professional Development Coordinator: Cristyn Edwards
External Relations Coordinator: Jordan Brown
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Hollie McKeil, Meghan Murray, Anna Zhuo
Facilities Officer: Tess Munro
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International Students Officer: Claudio Pareja, Aylin Tavakoli
Canadian Institute of Planners Representative:
Ernette Hutchings-Mason
Canadian Association of Planning Students Representative: Jessica Hayes
American Planning Association Representative:
Janet Kivett Knight
Sustainability Officer: Brett Freake, Kristy McConnel, Mike Phillips
Lunchtime Dialogue Coordinators: Allison Lasocha,
Sarah Marshall, Vivian Wong
AMS Representative: Kristy McConnel
GSS Representative: Emily Carrigan Gray
The Planning Student Association kicked off 2016 with the Annual General Meeting in January, during which the executive presented a draft of the association’s strategic plan. The PSA identified the following main goals for the 2016 year:

1. We will capitalize on our home within the Faculty of Applied Science by making use of the resources available to us as students in the faculty.

2. We will build on the 2015 PSA’s work, particularly through solidifying the newer positions and committees (Equity, Sustainability, Professional Development, External Relations).

3. We will provide a supportive environment for PSA members to thrive during their time at SCARP.

Specific projects over the next year will include a PSA website redesign, the launch of a longer-term sustainability project with a local partner organization, and a suite of student-run professional development workshops. And, of course, we will continue to work with the SCARP administration to ensure the progression of the new MCRP program meets student needs and expectations.
In December 2015, a group of students from the School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP), School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture (SALA), and the Faculty of Arts travelled to Ahmedabad, India for an intensive studio course offered jointly by The University of British Columbia and Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology University (CEPT) University. Led by Dr. Michael Leaf, PhD candidate Vrushti Mawani, and Dr. Rutul Joshi, The Unplannable City (?) was an intensive two-week course examining the effectiveness and the role of planning as a profession, and the characteristics of Indian (informal and formal) urbanization.

Students conducted field research in the neighbourhood of Juhapura, a rapidly growing area on the outskirts of Ahmedabad. The neighbourhood was of particular interest due to the ghettoization of local Muslim residents due to Hindu extremist violence and the lack of formal representation. Working with residents, non-profit organizations, and key stakeholders, students worked in six thematic areas examining the following topics:

1. Gender and Social Structure
2. Transportation and Mobility
3. Housing
4. Infrastructure
5. Livelihood and Local Economy
6. Education

For the Canadian students, the course was an opportunity to experience planning in a context characterized by the challenges and opportunities of rapid urbanization, a lack of basic urban service delivery, and informality. It was also a unique chance to develop relationships with Indian student planners and exchange ideas related to effective community engagement and the potential for planners to be advocates.

The course was also an opportunity for SCARP to form closer relationships with planning schools abroad. This partnership with CEPT University will continue in May 2016, when a group of Indian planning students will be visiting Vancouver and UBC for three weeks to explore the concept of “Vancouverism.”

In 2015 and 2016, SCARP students engaged and will be engaging in diverse international experiences related to planning. A group of 12 SCARP students went to Philippines, 9 students went to India, and 14 students will be going to Mexico. Currently, a group of SCARP students are planning to attend the Habitat III United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development in Quito, Ecuador, from 17 – 20 October 2016. If you would like more information, feel free to contact Hollie at: Hollie.mckeil@gmail.com
The Border: What does planning look like in an area with a history of religious communal violence? This wall divides the Muslim and Hindu community in Juhapura, a neighbourhood of Ahmedabad that is absent of formal public infrastructure and services.

Water Supply: Roads are crucial for residents’ everyday life. These two men are standing beside a water tank, where households receive daily shipments of fresh water via truck from the local government. However, during the monsoon season, the unpaved roads are often flooded, disrupting their supply of water. As a result, residents have to wait until the water recedes, or rely on a finite source of groundwater if they have access.
Community Meeting: The first focus group session organized by the UBC and CEPT students at the local community centre. This was an important opportunity to learn about life in Juhapura from community leaders and residents, and allowed the students to define their scope of research for the next two weeks that was directly informed by local experience.

Class Presentation: Dr. Michael Leaf (M) joined by guests Dr. Howard Spodek (R) from Temple University and Professor Mary Jane Rooney (L) from CEPT University listening to the students’ final presentations.
In Philippines, SCARP students executed participatory planning processes around climate change to increase the adaptive capacities of two Filipino municipalities, creating deliverables that were locally specific and community-based. The municipalities are now actively using the resulting documents to do further planning and community engagement, and to prepare their nationally-mandated Local Climate Change Adaptation Plans.

Baliwag and Guiguinto are both located in the province of Bulacan, north of Metro Manila. Both are growing, peri-urban municipalities and face a number of intersecting and complex problems around poverty, climate change, and urban development. Due to the region’s high level of vulnerability to climate change impacts, the Philippine national government created the National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP) in 2011, which mandates that municipalities create a corresponding Local Climate Change Action Plan (LCCAP).

The work carried out by students in the Philippines, created a structure, including baseline research, identified top priorities, and a blueprint of future processes, through which an LCCAP can be executed. The project responded to a real-world capacity gap in municipal government and provides a planning solution that will be directly used by municipal staff. The students approached this planning problem using a participatory, community-driven process to provide each municipality with a report that is useful, relevant, supported by the community, and easy to implement.
This coming April 2016, 10 SCARP students will be heading to Morelia, Mexico to work with the Planning Institute of Morelia (IMPLAN). The students will work closely with IMPLAN to provide ideas and input on an urban river management plan that is being developed in Morelia, Mexico. The rivers and streams of Morelia suffer from problems that are common to urban waterways around the world. IMPLAN, has identified Morelia's river network as an opportunity for urban renovation and ecological restoration. To lead the city in restoring its urban waterways, IMPLAN has begun the process of developing an urban river management plan which will consider water quality, public access/use, and flood protection, among other issues.

Through a series of field visits, conversations and lectures, the course will introduce students to the dilemmas and tradeoffs that confront city planners in Morelia, who are forced to make difficult decisions and balance competing human needs. The students will be divided into four teams: Urban River Team, Public Space Team, Urban Design Team and the Strategy Team, which will be targeting ecological restoration, public engagement, and urban design to co-create a more comprehensive plan.

The course will cover best practices in urban planning and urban river management, where students will review material in planning (land use planning, hazard mitigation, informal settlements) but also draw on topics from the physical sciences (watershed management, hydrology, urban hydrology, geomorphology), and the social sciences (community mapping, urban sociology and risk perception). Following a series of lectures and field trips, students will contribute ideas and analysis that may assist the Municipal Planning Institute in their development of the urban river management plan.
Six SCARP students attended the Northern Planning Conference in Whitehorse, Yukon during Reading Week. This four-day conference, held at the beautiful Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre on the traditional territory of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and the Southern Tutchone Tribal Council, mainly discussed land use planning and governance, with a particular focus on the unique complexities of planning in the North. This included topics such as the increasing impacts of climate change, Indigenous governance and resurgence, and industry and natural resources. A specific local context that framed many of the topics covered is the Yukon Umbrella Final Agreement, a land claims settlement achieved in 1997.

The presentations at the conference offered a wide range of perspectives from planners from across the North and the rest of Canada. Jeff Cook, Indigenous Community Planning instructor at SCARP, gave a keynote address on the third day of the conference about the planning principles, values, and methodology that guide his work as a planner for Indigenous communities. A particular issue that came up often during the conference, but was never quite resolved, was the separation between rational comprehensive land use planning and Indigenous ways of planning, including stewardship and Traditional Ecological Knowledge. Keynotes and panelists emphasized several times that the model of the future of land use planning in the North will need to be collaborative and respectful, and be based on a shared responsibility going forward between First Nations and non-Indigenous residents.
An important element of graduate level studies is the provision of opportunities to showcase student research highlighting contributions to academic scholarship as well as individual career development and achievement. In the face of increasing rates of chronic diseases among working adults, urban planners and public health professionals have investigated the extent to which transportation systems, land use patterns and urban design have contributed to sedentary lifestyles.

On February 1st, 2016, Eric Fox, 2015 graduate of the master’s program at SCARP, presented a poster on his recent research examining the relationship between workplace neighbourhood environment, physical activity and healthy living at the 2016 Active Living Research (ALR) Conference in Clearwater Beach, FL. The ALR Conference, held annually in the U.S., is a premier public health and planning venue that brings together internationally recognized researchers and practitioners in the field. Eric Fox was joined at the conference by his supervisor and Professor in Sustainable Transport at SCARP, Dr. Larry Frank, who presented on recent UBC research from a Study of Travel, Health and Activity Patterns along the Comox-Helmcken Greenway (Figure 1). The pre-post assessment of the greenway intervention in Downtown Vancouver demonstrated beneficial sustainable mode share and physical activity changes among surveyed participants.

Eric Fox presented recent findings from his SCARP capstone project analyzing the built environment around participants’ worksite locations and examining them in relation to participants’ health outcomes including moderate-vigorous physical activity (MVPA) and sedentary time spent in automobiles. A core objective of the study was to demonstrate that work environments which better enable active transportation and transit use are more supportive of healthy living and thereby help to reduce sedentary behaviour. The project utilized existing health outcome data from the Neighborhood Quality of Life Study (NQLS Prime); Dr. Larry Frank serves as a principal investigator on this study. The large scale research project leveraged over one thousand adults participants ages 18 to 66 in metropolitan Baltimore and Seattle. This phase of the study is the first of its kind to examine health impacts of workplace neighbourhood built environment using a combined walking and transit access “buffer” surface in a geographic information system (GIS) (Figure 2).
The walkability index within a 15 minute walking and transit travel time around workplaces was found to be positively associated with objectively measured MVPA whereby a 7 unit increase in walkability doubled the likelihood of achieving the U.S. Surgeon General’s recommended daily 30 minutes of MVPA. Worksite built environment measures and travel patterns including the walkability index are important predictors of MVPA and sedentary time spent in vehicles. An improved understanding of the link between workplace environment and health outcomes may guide interventions in the built environment that foster increased walking and benefit public health.

The article will be submitted for a publication soon and will be available this year. In the meantime, for more information read the full abstract using the 2016 ALR Conference mobile app and download the poster presentation through the Elsevier Poster In My Pocket mobile app.

Figure 2: Built environment surface “buffer” illustrating walking and transit access within 15 minutes of a participant workplace in Downtown Baltimore. Source: GTFS Data Exchange Inventory, 2015; Maryland Transportation Authority, 2015; ESRI, 2012.

Funding for this study was supported by a Canadian Graduate Scholarship from the Social Science & Humanities Research Council and a Walter C. Koerner Graduate Fellowship awarded by the University of British Columbia. The NQLS Prime study was made possible by a National Institutes of Health grant HL67350.
Former SCARP President and PSA President, George Benson, wins the UBC Student Leadership Conference, Faces of Today Award. The UBC SLC is North America’s largest student-led conference on student leadership and professional development. Annually, the conference brings together around 1200 students, alumni, and community members to UBC’s Vancouver campus.

The Award recognizes exemplary student leaders on campus who exhibit sustained leadership, community involvement, service and character. The award, which was presented at the opening and closing ceremonies of the conference, aims to invoke inspiration, and share their leadership experiences to all delegates. The eight award winners were highlighted at the UBC Student Leadership Conference through a video exposition piece. In addition, recipients are given a plaque and special recognition at the Awards Reception, which takes place following the Closing Ceremonies.
SCARP Honorable Mention in 2016 ULI Hines Student Competition

The Urban Land Institute (ULI) has recognized a UBC team, which includes three SCARP students (Alix Krahn, Aaron Lao and Jhon Mozo) by granting an honorable mention for their submission “Gradient City”; a proposal that responds to the 2016 ULI Hines Student Competition.

131 teams from over 50 North American universities participated in the competition challenge in an attempt to provide Midtown Atlanta with a vision for the development of a transitional area comprised of 4 parcels and their integration to the existing surroundings. The hope for Midtown is to achieve a thriving, sustainable, mixed-use, walkable and transit accessible neighbourhood.

The “Gradient City” was designed to complete the spectrum of urban experiences in Midtown while transforming an underdeveloped area of Atlanta into a complete neighbourhood. This design provides a unique character to the area through a gradient that seamlessly transitions from intimate to grand, from historic to innovation, and from work to play.

Congratulations!!
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.

Opinions expressed in NewsBytes are not necessarily those of UBC, SCARP, or the NewsBytes Editor.

If you have questions or comments, or would like to make a submission to a future edition of NewsBytes, please contact NewsBytes Editor and Outreach Coordinator, Maria Trujillo directly at scarp.news@ubc.ca, or contact the School of Community And Regional Planning at the address provided below.