

USP 475/575 URBAN DESIGN WORKSHOP – SPRING 2012
School of Urban Studies and Planning
College of Urban and Public Affairs
Portland State University

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THE WORKSHOP: The Urban Design Workshop is a professional exploration into the making of urban form. Theory and practice are intertwined in the work of the class that operates as an Urban Design Team, individually and collectively collaborating within research, innovation and design methodologies. Each spring, the subject of the class is selected to give the students an opportunity to contribute to the ongoing evolution of the City of Portland. By understanding the various systems that comprise the city, the interaction of those systems, the resultant urban forms and how strategic intervention can result in transformative change, the student becomes better prepared to participate as a professional and a citizen.

THE PROBLEM: Planning the Community of the Future/"It's not density; it's design"

As the regional MAX rail system develops, a line is being planned linking the city core to southeast Portland with ideas for how this significant transportation link can improve the neighborhoods and encourage future community sustainability and vitality through the areas it passes.

As Portland and the nation change, global warming, energy alternatives and environmental change dictate an increasing need for visionary thinking about how to create centers of community at both the regional and neighborhood scale that are balanced and sustainable in a future where abundant resources are no longer the default planning assumption.

The focus of this workshop will be to imagine and plan a future in which light rail station will contribute to the creation of sustainable communities of the future. This will require coming to grips with a definition for the meaning of "sustainability": physical, economic, social and environmental. It will also require defining the elements needed to make a complete "community" including preservation of identity, urban design elements needed, connections between all modes of transport, scale of retail and services, employment space, the housing types necessary, and provision for a coherent social fabric for the cycle of lifestyles. A very real challenge for such thinking is how to set the stage for a future that will be different while recognizing that what is planned must also be functional now.

The problem is to assist the community with creation of a vision for the length of the light rail from PSU to the new Willamette Bridgehead, using urban design to solve community problems and promote community goals. During the process, work will be reviewed and informed by stakeholders recruited by the urban design team.

The product of the workshop will be to prepare a concise description in text and graphics (12 pages or so) that includes:

- The planning process and public engagement
- Definitions of goals and objectives for the evolving corridor to meet the needs of the new century
- The plan and how it addresses community building for the future
- A short explanation of how the plan fits within the larger regional framework
- Suggestions for follow-through to lead toward implementation

This document will be forwarded to the adjacent neighborhoods and stakeholders, the Portland Planning Bureau, Tri-Met and the City Council—all of which are facing the challenges of future planning in Portland and Oregon.

WORKING METHODOLOGY: Each student will participate on three levels: (1) as a member of the class (Class Products), (2) as a member of a Collaborating Team (Team Products) and (3) as an individual (Journal).

EXPENSE: While there is no textbook required for this class, various maps, materials and supplies are required. Each student will be required to pay a fee of \$30 to a class fund that will be used to cover costs of reproduction, graphic materials, supplies and individual Journals. The fee is payable in cash or check made out to STASTNY:architect llc.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1 (04.02.12):

Orientation/Process/Course Goals

Lecture: *The Making of Urban Form (Stastny)*

- Role of Urban Design in the Planning Process
- Relationship of physical form to economic and cultural form
- Influence of natural phenomenon on form
- Role of infrastructure and service systems as a determinant of form
- Achieving “sustainability”—environmentally, economically, culturally

Creating a Database (Starkie)

- Maps (Ownership, land use, form)
- Photographic record/analysis
- Existing adopted plans and initiatives
- Economic information
 - Demographics
 - Spending
 - Existing Business
 - Area Employment
- “Feel” of the site and area
- Texture and scale
- Traffic and pedestrian flow
- Open space
- Other

Defining the Problem and Expectations

- Defining the Study Area
- Instructor Expectations
- Student Expectations
- Stakeholder Expectations

Team Assignment: Begin Inventory/Database

Individual: Define Urban Design (Journal)

Week 2 (04.09.12):

The Context: Responding to the Culture of a Place

Engagement: Walking Tour of Study Area

Team Assignment: Complete Site Inventory/Database and
Record Impressions of Corridor

Individual: Impressions of Corridor and Environment (Journal)

Week 3 (04.16.12):

Components of the Community: Creating a Development Program

Lecture: *International Urbanism
(Martin Glastra van Loon)*

- Context
- Ideas/Concepts
- Results

Lecture: *Constructing Development Program Options (Starkie)*

- Potential uses
- Synergy of uses
- Economic return
- Relationship to land configuration
- City height and F.A.R. requirements

Team Assignment: Draft Development Program

Individual: Define the “Community of the Future” (Journal)

- Week 4 (04.23.12): Exploring Connections and Connectivity**
 Lecture: *Public Art as Urban Design (Bob Hastings, Tri-Met)*
 Strategies to meet Stakeholder Expectations:
- Streets
 - Transit
 - Pedestrian Networks
 - Open Space
 - Urban Form
- Team Assignment: Define Elements of Connectivity
 Individual: How to measure success in achieving connectivity (Journal)
- Week 5 (04.30.12): Designing Plan Options**
 Workshop: Segment 1: Team Drawing
 Segment 2: Pin-up and discussion
- Team Assignment: Create a Plan Option based on Development Program
 Individual: How the Plan Option addresses Expectations of the Stakeholders (Journal)
- Week 6 (05.07.12): Evaluate Plan Options/Explore Funding Options**
 Lecture/Presentation: *Public Funding Options (Starkie)*
- Team Assignment: Determine Preferred Option
 Individual: Critique of other Teams' Options (Journal)
- Week 7 (05.14.12): Defining a Strategy for Implementation and Refining the Urban Design Plan**
 Lecture/Presentation: *Lynn Weijand*
 Discussion: Critical factors in Implementation
- Impact on the Urban Design Plan
 - Timing
 - Investment/Partners
 - Phasing of site
 - Capital Investment required
- Team Assignment: Create a Strategy for implementation and modify plan as required.
 Individual: Thoughts on Implementation (Journal)
- Week 8 (05.21.12): Evaluating the Draft Plan and Strategy**
 Critique: by Instructors
- Team Assignment: Revise Draft Plan for presentation
 Individual: Process issues to complete the task (Journal)
- Week 9 (Memorial Day): Presentation and Evaluation**
 (Class TBD)
 Engagement: Presentation to stakeholders
 Team Assignment: Finalize Plan and all documentation
 Individual: Identify "lessons learned" from stakeholders (Journal)
- Week 10: (06.04.12) Lessons Learned**
 Discussion: Overview of work by Teams and Individuals
- The Role of Design in the Planning Process
 - Making Advocates
 - Final Recommendations
- Week 11: Final Report Completion**
 (per finals schedule)

EXPECTATIONS AND EVALUATION

The following shall constitute the expectations of the Instructors and the evaluation of the student's performance. The PSU Achievement Grading System (A-F) will be employed. The five elements that will contribute to the grade are as follows:

Element 1: Attendance (20%)

All students are expected to attend all class/workshop sessions. Unexcused absences shall be limited to one session. Excused absences shall be cleared through the Instructor one week prior to the relevant session.

Element 2: Team Products (20%)

The products of each Team will be evaluated on the following:

- 1) Understanding of context and applicability of solutions
- 2) Clarity of verbal and graphic presentation
- 3) Innovative ideas or design expression

The "Team Evaluation" for the Team as a whole will be entered as a component of the individual student evaluation.

Element 3: Individual Contribution to Team (20%)

Each Team Member will provide an evaluation of their fellow Team members. A compilation by the Instructors of each Team's individual evaluations will form the basis for this element of the grade. Each Team Member will evaluate their team in five categories:

- 1) Commitment to the Team
- 2) Presents individually challenging ideas
- 3) Collaborates in bringing Team to consensus on issues
- 4) Respects other Team members and their ideas
- 5) Energy brought to the process

Each Team Member will be asked to evaluate each fellow Team Member according to the five categories by the following ranking system:

- 1) Does not meet expectations of Evaluator (value 1)
- 2) Meets expectations of Evaluator (value 3)
- 3) Exceeds expectations of Evaluator (value 5)

Element 4: Individual Journal (20%)

Each Journal will be evaluated by the Instructors as to the following:

- 1) Completeness
- 2) Ideas
- 3) Impressions
- 4) References
- 5) Sketches, diagrams, graphics

Each Journal shall, at a minimum, contain an entry prior to each class as to expectations of that session, notes during that class session, and impressions after that session. Additionally, the Journal should contain the specific assignments of the course curriculum.

The Journal shall be used to create at least one sketch, photo or diagram for each week of the course. The purpose of this requirement is for the workshop participants to learn to express and create concepts graphically.

The Journal should, at the end of the term, be a record of the events, issues encountered, lessons learned and identification of areas for further exploration. It will be a tool and reference for further work in the field.

Element 5: Professional Acumen/Attitude (20%)

This element will be the overall impression of the Instructors of the individual student's professional and personal contribution to the workshop, the workshop product and respect for fellow workshop members.