



City & Regional Planning

2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT



City and Regional Planning Vision

The Department of City and Regional Planning at the University of Memphis will be nationally recognized as a program that builds on deep community ties and interdisciplinary connections to empower students, graduates, and partners in the pursuit of just, equitable, and sustainable cities and regions.

City and Regional Planning Mission

Our mission is to **educate** the next generation of inspired urban planners and scholars, conduct **research** that influences planning policy and knowledge, and **engage** in community partnerships to affect local **change**.

City and Regional Planning Values

Student Success

We provide students with opportunities to participate as members of the local planning community.

Justice, Diversity and Inclusion

We promote democratic learning through exposure to multiple perspectives and experiences. We pursue policies, plans, and projects that go beyond treating symptoms and confront systemic barriers that limit equal access to opportunity.

Collaboration and Interdisciplinarity

We seek partnerships both within and beyond the University to enhance our actions and our outcomes.

Service and Community Engagement

We engage our community, not as a laboratory, but through reciprocal partnerships in an engaged scholarship model.

Sustainability

We pursue actions and research that support long-lasting environmental, social, and economic health.

Innovation

We seek new approaches to problems to advance planning practice.



August 2022

Dear Friends,

The Department of City & Regional Planning values our relationships with our graduates and local planning professionals. This Annual Report allows us to reflect on our recent accomplishments as we look ahead to the future together.

This year we are happy to report that we are settling in to our newly renovated space on the first floor of Browning Hall (just next door to our old home in McCord). The upgrade has allowed us to add a planning studio space in addition to the PIT Lab, and gives us access to a separate, shared instructional computer lab. It is taking a little while to make the hall feel like home, especially amid the continuing fog of Covid isolation and nomadism, so come by for a visit and help add some personality!

In the meantime, we hope you'll enjoy reviewing the highlights of our achievements in education and career placement, research, and community engagement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Charles A. Santo'. The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Charles A. Santo, Chair

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Scenes from CoPED Summer Study Abroad, 2022, Sicily





Student Enrollment and Graduation

The Master of City and Regional Planning program rebounded nicely from the national trend of declining graduate enrollment during the pandemic, enrolling 15 new students in the 2021-2022 academic. Projected enrollment for 2022 also looks strong.

We continue to attract students from a wide geographic area. Over the past three years, more than 50 percent of our students hold undergraduate degrees from institutions outside of Tennessee. We have enrolled international students from Ghana, Bangladesh, Italy, and the UK. We have expanded our opportunities to provide interdisciplinary graduate education by helping students craft dual master's degree paths, with recent graduates pairing their planning degree with degrees in Anthropology, Architecture, Geography and Social Work. Our faculty are now also supervising several students in the new interdisciplinary Urban Affairs PhD program.

The Department awarded 6 Master's degrees in 2021. Congratulations to the following graduates:

Sara Barrera

BA, 2016, University of Memphis

Jasmine Bowden

BA 2014, University of Tennessee-Knoxville

Nathaniel McHaffie

BA, 2014, Evangel University

Laura Myers

BA, 2018, University of Memphis

Andrea Jimenez

MArch, 2019, University of Memphis

Delia Valastro

MSEA, 2020, University of Catania

Career Connections: Fellowships, Assistantships, and Job Placement

Our active agenda of funded research and partnerships with local community development organizations enables us to support many of our students with Graduate Assistantship, Internship, or Fellowship opportunities that allow them to gain valuable practical experience while addressing planning problems in the City of Memphis.

Externally funded Internship placements in 2021-2022 included:

Memphis Area Transit Authority

Laura Lambole

Colton Elliot

City of Memphis, Division of Housing and Community Development

Miles Carter

Memphis and Shelby County Division of Planning and Development

Sophie Vogel

Sara Barrera

Andrea Jimenez

City of Millington

Nathaniel McHaffie

City of Memphis Bikeway and Pedestrian Program

Will Ezzell

Memphis Parks

Robin Richardson

During 2021-2022, three of our students participated in the HCD Fellowship Program, funded by the City of Memphis Division of Housing and Community Development (HCD). Those students were placed with the following agencies.

The Works CDC

Jasmine Bowden

Innovate Memphis

Jafrin Mouli

Clean Memphis

Delia Valastro

The following GAs worked with faculty in the Department:

Robert Harris Laura Myers Julia Nickle Nabanita Nira

Job Placement

Here is where our 2022 graduates have started their planning careers:

Sara Barrera Development Project Manager, Downtown Memphis Commission

Nathaniel McHaffie Assistant Planner, City of Millington, TN

Andrea Jimenez Planner-Architectural Designer, Daily Design Group (Memphis)

Delia Valastro Mobility Planning Consultant MIC-HUB (Milan, Italy)

Alumni Notes

The 2021-2022 academic year was also full of career advancement, accolades, and noteworthy professional accomplishments for the program's alumni.

John Zeanah (2005), Director of Planning and Development for Memphis and Shelby County, is working on a book (to be published by Island Press) about making comprehensive planning a more adaptive process from plan creation through implementation, considering the limitations on public planning and fragmentation of planning responsibility in most communities. John has been a regular Adjunct Faculty member for the Department, teaching Land Use Controls.

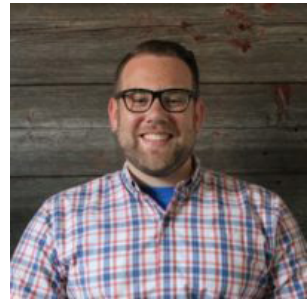
John will be joined by his MCRP classmates **Sutton Mora**, and **Paul Young** on a Fall 2022 episode of WKNO's *Behind the Headlines*. The trio will speak with

Alumni Notes (continued)

host Eric Barnes, of the Daily Memphian, about their time together in the UofM planning program and their thoughts on the future of the Memphis. Sutton Mora is Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer at The Community Foundation of Greater Memphis. Paul Young is President and CEO of the Downtown Memphis Commission.



Kyle Wagenshutz (2010) recently launched a non-profit consulting firm, City Thread. [City Thread](#)'s mission is to build, boost, and resource local coalitions around a shared vision for accelerating mobility and place-based projects. Kyle was the City of Memphis' first Bikeway/Pedestrian Coordinator and most recently served as Vice President of Local Innovation at People for Bikes (Boulder, CO). Kyle's team recently helped 5 U.S. cities build 335 miles of new bikeways - from concept to completion - in only 24 months. And we're hoping to find a new cohort of cities to start again early next year. A third-party analysis by the [Urban Institute](#) states, "the Final Mile approach successfully encouraged a rapid expansion of local cycling networks. This expansion was enabled through a combination of locally set, ambitious goals for infrastructure expansion; continuous pressure on political officials to achieve those goals; and external funding for communications and engineering support."



Other alumni making an impact in transportation planning include **Susan Steffenhagen** (2018) and **Ian Preston** (2015), who both serve on the Board of the *Young Professionals in Transportation (YPT) Nashville* chapter. Steffenhagen was the recipient of YPT International's Changemakers in Transportation award in 2022, and started a new job as a consultant for Milepost Consulting, SPC.

Preston also moved from a public sector role at TDOT to the private sector, as a Transportation Planner with the multinational infrastructure consulting firm, AECOM.



Donald Anthony (2007) returned to the Memphis metro area in a leadership capacity, taking the position of Planning Director for the City of Lakeland. Anthony had previously served as planning director for Murfreesboro and for the town of Nolensville.

Jessica Mosely (2017) moved into a leadership role with the Greater Memphis Chamber, as Director of Diversity + Community Development. She is leading the organization's initiative to strengthen neighborhood economies. Jessica previously served as Manager of Competitiveness Initiatives for the Chamber.



Wyatt Archer (2021) left Chapel Hill, NC and is currently a Community Planner with Bolton & Menk in Des Moines, IA.

Suzie Marshall (2021) is working as a Planner for the West Memphis MPO.

Isaac Akers (2020) is a Project Coordinator Self + Tucker Architects in Memphis.

Shea Stock (2019) started a new role as a Business Services Analyst II with the Memphis and Shelby County Division of Planning and Development.

Scarlet Ponder (2015) is serving as a Project Manager for the RJ Group in Bellingham, WA.

Jessica Buttermore (2010) is splitting time as an Organizer for both ACORN International and the Communications Workers of America. Buttermore was also accepted into the 2022 Strategic Corporate Research Summer School, co-sponsored by the Cornell School of Industrial and Labor Relations and the AFL-CIO. The school trains individuals to work in social-change organizations that strive to make and keep corporations accountable, including labor unions, workers' centers, environmental justice groups, and community-based organizations.

If we missed any alumni career advancement or noteworthy accomplishments, send us a note and we'll be sure to share on social media!

Community Connections and Outreach

City and Regional Planning faculty have been working with the Memphis Area Association of Governments (MAAG) to help the region prepare for the development impacts of the pending Ford Blue Oval megasite project. A research team led by **Dr. Charlie Santo** (supported by **Dr. Stephen Diko**, **Dr. Andy Guthrie**, and PhD student **Mahdis Modaresi**) provided insight at

the MAAG's "The West Tennessee Mega-Site/ Blue Oval City Next Steps" event in March. The presentation focused on approaches to proactive regional coordination to ensure that the employment opportunities created by Ford and related firms accrue to the current population of our broader community and do not further exacerbating systemic inequity for those who call the region home. In addition, regional planning will be necessary to ensure that urban residents (from Memphis and Jackson) have adequate transportation access to the site (more than 50 miles away) and that rural communities closer to the site can

maintain their small-town character. City and Regional Planning faculty are part of an interdisciplinary research team in the running for an EDA Build Back Better Regional Challenge grant that would support regional planning and economic development efforts related to the Blue Oval project.

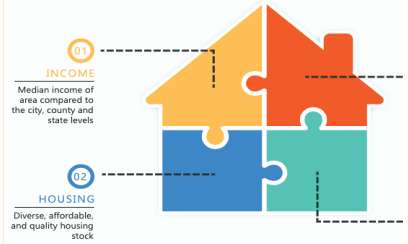
Students in our 2021 Comprehensive Planning Studio, led by **Dr. Andy Guthrie**, partnered with The Heights CDC to develop an Equitable Housing and Ownership Plan for the Highland Heights neighborhood. The plan was developed as a supplement Small Area Plan prepared as a part of Memphis 3.0. It seeks to ensure that as redevelopment opportunities occur, creating a more attractive community for prospective residents and businesses, Highland Heights will be able to sustain its current population by fostering an environment inclusive to residents' diverse needs including age, income, lifestyles, household structures and culture. The class was conducted in close c



collaboration with our community partner, The Heights CDC and also involved a significant on-the-ground community outreach component conducted by students. The project concluded with a public presentation of the plan in the community.



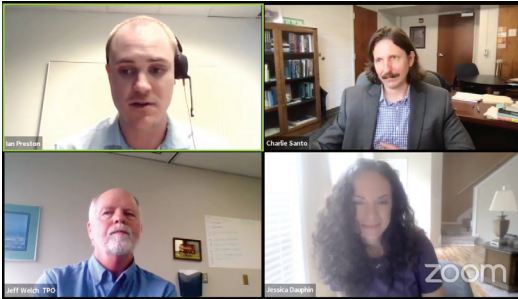
Figure 2.3 Equitable Planning Puzzle



Our Community Economic Development course, led by **Dr. Stephen Diko**, engaged in a community partnership with Memphis Artists for Change (MAC). Students worked with the community organization to develop the report, "Arts and Culture for Transformative Community Economic Development in Memphis." Dr. Diko was recently awarded a UofM Engaged Scholarship Faculty Research Grant with Dr. Claudio Meier (Civil Engineering). The pair will continue to work with MAC in a unique approach to addressing stormwater flooding in South Memphis through "Transdisciplinary, Transformative Citizen-Science." MAC employs an asset-based community development model and has demonstrated how art can motivate and inspire community participation.

Dr. Charlie Santo is continuing efforts to bridge the digital divide in Memphis' most vulnerable neighborhoods. In partnership with the City of Memphis Division of Housing and Community Development (HCD), Start Co., Knowledge Quest, Code Crew and Urban Strategies, the project includes provision of broadband internet and "digital literacy" training to selected households and advanced "digital education" training for selected youth participants. Using a social envelope approach that links digital inclusion efforts to existing case management work and employing digital mentors, the project enables households receiving broadband service to use the technology to its fullest capacity. Dr. Greg Washington (School of Social Work) is leading a team of Social Work student interns who serve as digital mentors.

Dr. Santo also participated in a panel discussion of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and its Impact on Tennessee, hosted Young Professionals in Transportation – Nashville. The event was moderated by MCRP alumnus, Ian Preston.



THE BIPARTISAN INFRASTRUCTURE LAW (BIL) & ITS IMPACT ON TENNESSEE

A VIRTUAL PANEL DISCUSSION

PANELISTS

JESSICA DAUPHIN
PRESIDENT & CEO
TRANSIT ALLIANCE OF
MIDDLE TENNESSEE

CHARLIE SANTO, PHD
CHAIR
DEPARTMENT OF CITY &
REGIONAL PLANNING @
UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS

JEFF WELCH, AICP
DIRECTOR
KNOXVILLE REGIONAL
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING
ORGANIZATION

MAY 26, 2022
11:00AM CT

REGISTER @
[BIT.LY/3T7NASHVILLE](https://bit.ly/3T7NASHVILLE)

Dr. Santo is also a regular commentator on Emily Trenholm’s (2001) Memphis Metropolis weekly radio show and podcast. The show airs Monday’s at 1:00 on WXYR 91.7, Memphis newest non-profit community radio station. You can also find episode anywhere you get your podcasts.



Research Highlights

Dr. Reza Banai co-authored two chapters in a forthcoming book titled *Advances in Urbanism, Smart Cities and Sustainability* to be published by Taylor’s and Francis/ CRC Press. The chapters include a case analysis of sprawl and blight in Memphis. His current research focuses on the impact of industrial blight on the neighborhood and the environment.

Dr. Diko published several articles on urban green spaces, climate change, and resilience. He also co-authored “[Urban Planning as a Career Preference](#)”

[for Students: Efforts to Improve Awareness about the Profession,](#)” with Dr. Leah Hollstein and Dr. Danilo Palazzo. This team is developing an edited book on this topic for Routledge.

Dr. Andy Guthrie published a chapter in *Applications of Access*, edited by David Levinson and Alireza Ermagun, recognized leaders in the field of transportation planning. The research proposes a novel approach to measuring transportation accessibility to multiple destination types. He was also lead author of a geospatial analysis of the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on eviction rates in Memphis, prepared for the Hooks Institute’s 2021 Policy Papers. Guthrie and Dr. Sabya Mishra (Civil Engineering) received a \$100,000 grant from USDOT, in partnership with MATA. The pair will develop a Memphis case study as part of the USDOT Accelerating Innovative Mobility project.

University of Memphis Design Collaborative

UMDC continued its partnership with lead researchers from Iowa State University and a network of cities along the Mississippi River to examine the urban-rural interface where productive commodity agriculture land uses are in close proximity to urban centers. The team was awarded a **National Science Foundation** grant to support an Urban-Rural Systems Research Coordination Network (RCN) that will bring together an interdisciplinary group of researchers and stakeholders to develop new research collaborations and directions that address the multi-dimensional natural and human-made challenges faced by communities at urban-rural interfaces within the Mississippi River Basin. Five metropolitan areas within the river basin will form the backbone of the project: Minneapolis/St. Paul, Davenport, St. Louis, Memphis, and Baton Rouge.

Study Abroad

First launched in 2012, our **Community Planning and Environmental Design (CoPED) Summer School in Sicily** continues to pursue economic and community development projects contained in the Simeto River Agreement that was formalized in May of 2015. This year’s theme “Active San Biagio” explored the relationship between physical space, social dynamics, and the consequences of uneven and unequal development. Students worked with resident activists in the San Biagio neighborhood, located in the eastern part of the city of Paternò. Led by Dr. Lambert-Pennington, and colleagues from UMass Boston and University of Catania, students traced the history of this once “informal” neighborhood, which

was built by agricultural workers without municipal regulation. Teams conducted ethnographic walking tours to map street level physical details, observe uses of public spaces, and interview residents, and analyzed previously collected stakeholder interviews and demographic data. They found that San Biagio is a marginalized community with few public spaces, limited social services, many vacancies, and environmental challenges including inconsistent water, litter, and irregular streets. Students participated in community workshops to engage residents in participatory co-learning activities, identify priority action areas, and co-design programs and interventions. From these workshops, students developed three integrated strategic projects, which were well received by community members and the Mayor of Paterno at a final event held at Palazzo Alessi.





Keep in Touch

If you have a new address, or any news you would like included in a future Annual Report or newsletter, or posted on our website, please contact us at cityplanning@memphis.edu or by phone at 901.678.2161.

You can also follow us on Facebook at

<http://www.facebook.com/crp.memphis>

or join our group on LinkedIn:

<http://www.linkedin.com/groups/University-Memphis-City-Regional-Planning-3960776>

Support the Department

If you would like to make a contribution to support the efforts of the Department of City and Regional Planning, you can do so online at <http://www.memphis.edu/giving> (be sure to specify the City and Regional Planning Foundation Fund 20729) or mail your contribution, payable to The University of Memphis Foundation*, to:

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107 Browning Hall, University of Memphis
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*be sure to indicate in the Memo line that the donation is to Fund 20729. City and Regional Planning

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