

Urban Plan Mix - Your Mid-Semester Update!

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We're excited to be launching our first newsletter to showcase the exciting work being done by faculty and students in urban planning and geography! Below, you'll find some of the best work being showcased by our diverse and talented teams. Besides ongoing work, we're also growing! The Masters in Public Administration (MPA) program is now officially a part of the Department of Urban and Regional Planning. This expands our graduate-level program offerings to three, and cements our position as a leading institution at the state and national level.

Please enjoy the read, and don't hesitate to [visit our website](#) or to [reach out to one of our faculty](#) to learn more about our programs.

Congratulations !



APA Recognizes SJSU Project

The American Planning Association (APA), California Northern Section, has given an Academic of Award of Excellence to graduate students in the URBP-295 Capstone Studio course! This group studied Guadalupe River Park and its users to provide recommendations to the Guadalupe River Park Conservancy. Their work was shaped by an innovative philosophy and public engagement process known as Reimagining the Civic Commons (RCC) which advocates for revitalized and connected public spaces.

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Faculty Updates



New Book Alert!



New Work by Prof. Gordon

Look out for a brand-new book by our very own department chair [Laxmi Ramasubramanian](#) ! Co-authors are leading geographic information science (GIS) expert Jochen Albrecht, and experienced architect and planner Deborah Rojas De Leon. "GIS and Housing: Principles and Practices" comes out at Taylor & Francis (CRC Press) on December 1st, 2023

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Douglas

Associate professor [Gordon Douglas](#) has had several pieces of academic scholarship published recently, including a chapter on urban design research methods. Gordon is especially excited about the methods piece, called "Research by the Seat of Your Pants: The Bicycle, the Camera, and the Sequential Case Method in Studying Urban Informality," available now in [The Routledge Handbook of Urban Design Research Methods](#) .

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Fighting Fire with Flight

It's a bird... It's a plane... No, it's a cutting-edge drone equipped with thermal imaging! Dr. Bo Yang, assistant professor of GIS in our geography program, led the thermal and mapping missions for a prescribed fire experiment conducted by SJSU's Wildfire Interdisciplinary Research Center (WIRC) and CalFire. Multiple research projects are currently underway after [this momentous and unprecedented experiment](#) to better understand wildfire behavior and ecology. Several graduate research assistants from URBP and other departments are contributing to this research and gaining valuable fire knowledge and skills.

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Policy Research on E-Bike Safety

Professor [Asha Weinstein Agrawal](#) is beginning a new research project on e-bike safety policy, as called for in the recently-enacted [California Senate Bill 381](#) . She will be working with Dr. [Kevin Fang](#) , Associate Professor at Sonoma State and a former instructor in SJSU's MUP program.

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Student Updates



Project Highlight: Beneath I-280

What was here before the freeways? In a new project from the [Institute for Metropolitan Studies](#), an SJSU research team led by IMS Fellow Leila Ullmann (now a grad student at UCLA) examined never-before-studied CalTrans archives documenting the appraisal and removal of hundreds of homes through eminent domain for the construction of San Jose freeways I-280 and CA-87. With a grant from [Mineta Transportation Institute](#) (MTI) and the help of Masters in Urban Planning (MUP) students, we built an [interactive map and website](#) to bring the story to light.



Aerial Mapping for HIZ Inspections

Home ignition zone (HIZ) inspections play a key role in preventing home loss in wildland-urban interface (WUI) areas. Could drones, public survey data, GIS and AI be incorporated into the HIZ inspection process to increase efficiency and bolster loss prevention? Dr. Bo Yang's GeoFly lab and student lead Henri Brillon (left) are investigating this question as part of a larger multidisciplinary study on defensible space compliance, in collaboration with SJSU's Wildfire Interdisciplinary Research Center. [Learn more about this project here.](#)

Also pictured: David Benterou



New Alumni Hired by MidPen Housing

MUP student Brandon Weaver was recently hired as a Project Associate by [MidPen Housing](#). He will be joining the core Bay Area team based out of the Downtown Oakland office, which includes other MUP alumni. Pictured is [MidPen's first affordable housing project](#) for staff of SFUSD, located in the Sunset District. Brandon attended the groundbreaking for this project while working for the Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development.

Congratulations, Brandon!

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