

Planning Utah

University of Utah Department of City and Metropolitan Planning

2024



City and
Metropolitan
Planning

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City & Metropolitan Planning students, faculty and staff after the 2024 College of Architecture and Planning Convocation.

Message from the Chair



Divya Chandrasekhar

As we close another remarkable year, I am filled with pride and gratitude for the achievements our students and faculty have made together. Our program continues to thrive thanks to the dedication and support of our exceptional faculty, students, and esteemed alumni.

A key change in our department leadership has marked this past year. **Stacy Harwood** is resuming her position as Professor in the department after having served so ably as our Chair for six years. We thank Stacy for all her hard work and dedication in leading the department these past years and wish her the best as she takes a well-deserved academic leave.

Our achievements, on the other hand, have remained steady and rising! We are particularly proud of the curricular advancements we have made this year. Through coursework, our students have been actively engaged in projects that address critical urban ecological challenges, from water pollution to placemaking to housing affordability. Our courses took students into the community—in Housing Policy & Planning, students engaged with community organizations on the West Side to explore resident perspectives on housing—and deep into art and culture—in Land, Law & Culture, students explored the intersections between culture, art, public policy, economy, and the physical environment. Our Urban Ecology program at the Utah Asia Campus, led by **Reazul Ahsan** and **Idil Ayril**, continues to report significant achievements on and off campus, including an appearance on a famous YouTube channel featuring happenings in Korea!

Our student and alumni community is just extraordinary! This year's MCMP Professional Projects featured some very high-quality projects focused on key issues facing our region and the country. Our

graduating PhD students have begun new careers as postdoctoral scholars and tenure-track faculty at the University of California, Berkeley; Towson University; and Incheon National University in Korea. Our students have also stayed engaged with a broad professional and peer community through conferences such as the Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting, the American Planning Association Utah meeting, and the National Planning Conference.

I am also proud to share that several of our faculty members have received prestigious grants for research in land use and transportation, urban greening, aging communities, and disaster resilience. They publish scholarship that advances our field, including one featured here by faculty member **Alessandro Rigolon** and CMP alumni **Keunhyun Park** and **Dong-ah Choi**.

Last year, we also welcomed **C. Aujean Lee** as an Assistant Professor. Her research on diverse communities and community engagement adds critical breadth to faculty expertise within the department. As we look ahead, we remain committed to providing our students with a comprehensive and transformative educational experience.

Finally, a word of appreciation to MCMP student **Fairuz Noshin** and Professor **Stacy Harwood**, who worked diligently over the summer to put together the snapshots of success you see in this newsletter. We could not have done it without them!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Divya'.

Divya Chandrasekhar
Professor and Chair
Department of City & Metropolitan Planning

Students Engaging Utah



Claire Peterson

Urban Ecology Honors Student: Claire Peterson

My honors thesis explored how population changes within Salt Lake County are correlated to the water quality in the Jordan River and its seven major creeks (from north to south: City, Red Butte, Emigration, Parleys, Mill, Big Cottonwood, and Little Cottonwood Creeks). The water quality indicators I used were pH, conductivity, total dissolved solids (TDS), dissolved oxygen (DO), and E. coli. I used P-value hypothesis testing and GIS analysis to explore the relationship between population density and water quality. I did not discover a statistically significant correlation between any of these variables; however, the process of doing this research was meaningful. Researching and writing my thesis was honestly very difficult. I often found myself discouraged by the results. It was important to keep reminding myself that my research still contributed valuable information to future researchers. I'm grateful for Professor **Divya Chandrasekhar's** guidance throughout this experience, as she offered great insight through every step of the process. I am also very appreciative to have had support from Professor **Keith Bartholomew**, who helped me become confident in my literature review, and Professor Tim Edgar from the geography department, who taught me how to do statistical hypothesis tests.



Keith Bartholomew

Land, Law & Culture by Professor Keith Bartholomew

The laws that guide how individuals and societies use land are the result of both cultural and geophysical influences. Similarly, cultures and lands are shaped by laws and policies developed by societies and implemented by individuals and institutions. Land, Law & Culture (LLC), a required Urban Ecology course, uses an intersection of history, the fine arts, geography, and policy to gain a better understanding of how the physical landscape, economic activity, cultural representations, and public policy mutually influence each other. As students in an upper-division writing/communications course, LLC students write in class every day, responding to the course's three primary texts and several additional sources drawn from environmental history, planning, and jurisprudence. Every Friday, the class engages in "cultural pivots," in which students consider representative artworks—paintings, photographs, music, literature—from the period we have been studying earlier in the week. At the end of the semester, students selected their favorite artwork and wrote about how that work connects to landscape, nature or the environment. Here are some of their selections from the spring 2024 class:

Luke Williams: “I loved the work of John Constable, a major figure of landscape painting in Britain in the early 19th century. It was during the time of a massive socio-economic transition, becoming the first largely industrial society. . . . He has a theme for dark and stormy skies. This could be a symbol of the shift in the economy but also an indication of his emotions. My favorite painting of his is *The Sea near Brighton*. The beautiful blend of the clouds into the ocean is striking to me; the two textures work off each other so well.”



John Constable, The Sea near Brighton (1826), Tate Gallery, London. Image released under Creative Commons CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 DEED.

Clair Peterson: “I wanted to talk about Copland’s *Appalachian Spring* as one of the pieces I liked most from this class. What stood out to me about Copland’s piece is that it has that sort of Americanized sound that we may hear in an old Western film. I could hear a story being told through the instruments. . . . I think his composition was very influential on perceptions of the opportunity the American wilderness seemed to have at that time. It had its slow and fast moments, but was, overall, very grand and painted wilderness as something unique to America, desirable yet adventurous.”

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APPALACHIAN SPRING by AARON COPLAND
arranged by JAY DAWSON
permission by CHRIS CROCKARELL

Vigorously ♩ = 150

EPISODE I

Copyright 1941 by The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc. Copyright Renewed.
The arrangement © Copyright 2000 by The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc.

Aaron Copland, Appalachian Spring (excerpt), 1945, The Pulitzer Prizes.

Students Engaging Utah

Lucy Auernig: “The works that caught my attention the most were the nature photographs taken by Ansel Adams, more specifically the photos taken of national parks. Adams captures the realness and feelings. Nothing in the photos feels staged. . . . Someone can view these photos from thousands of miles away yet feel how special these places are. I think this is very important when pushing for change.”



Ansel Adams, Grand Canyon National Park (1941), National Archives.

Theory Meets Practice: Highlights from Urban Design Fundamentals by Adjunct Instructor Molly Robinson

Walk the streets of Paris or South Philadelphia and you will observe a dynamic rhythm. Echoed in your footsteps, the regularity of the storefronts, stoops, and small alleys compels you forward. Delighted by the layers of texture and color from the obvious details like signs and window displays, shadows and light mask and reveal new things as you wander. Does a walk along Salt Lake City's streets offer a comparable experience? This recurring question provokes discussion, research, and action here in our city.

In Urban Design Fundamentals (an elective course for undergraduate and graduate students), students explore the theoretical foundations of urban design and its practical applications. Through immersive experiences like site visits, visual interpretations, and peer critique, the course aims to build urban design literacy, enhance critical thinking, and foster a deep appreciation for the role of design in shaping vibrant, sustainable cities. Early modules focus on understanding essential design principles and developing observation skills.

One of the highlights of this course is the hands-on learning approach. Through site visits and real-world projects, students have the opportunity to apply their knowledge in practical settings. From sketching street sections to evaluating current city projects, students can build spatial, visual, and graphic literacy—skills valuable to planners and designers. Effective communication skills—visual, oral, and written—are valued and honed through assignments and classwork.



Students Engaging Utah

The course also explores the duality of urban design as both direct and indirect practices. Direct design includes the physical implementation of urban design: public realm improvements, tactical urbanism initiatives, and wayfinding systems, for example. Meanwhile, indirect design focuses on design policies such as zoning, historic preservation, and design guidelines. This dual approach ensures that students develop a comprehensive understanding of how design can shape human settlements both physically and through policy. Whether you seek to pursue a career in urban design, architecture, or landscape architecture or you wish to practice as a municipal planner, activist, or real estate developer knowledge of design policy—how it’s made, applied, and interpreted—and understanding of the design process from vision to construction are foundational.

Memorable parts of the course include walking tours of various locations in Salt Lake City where students are asked to observe the built environment, noting what urban design principles are at play and which ones are broken. As students explore Sugar House Monument Plaza, lessons on design review and complex urban systems are shared. At 9th & 9th, we debate the role of public art in placemaking. The long road from vision to implementation is evident on State Street. Students engage in discussions about the roles and responsibilities of planners and designers in the future of urban design, contemplating global issues like climate change and public health and the unique issues faced by local communities. Enriched by guest speakers and on-site learning, students gain valuable insights and real-world perspectives, inspiring a deeper understanding and appreciation of how thoughtful design can enhance the rhythm and quality of everyday life.

Urban Ecology at the Utah Asia Campus **by Assistant Professor Lecturer Idil Ayril**



UAC Urban Ecology program has had a remarkable semester, marked by hands-on experiences, collaborative projects, and significant recognitions. One of the highlights this semester was our students’ involvement with vertical gardens and rooftop farms. They started to grow their vegetables, gaining insights into urban agriculture.

Additionally, 13 students from Urban Ecology have been mentoring middle school students through weekly workshops. We are proud to announce that our mentoring team, Hello, City, was selected from among hundreds of teams to receive funding of 2,000,000 KRW from the Korean government for these mentoring sessions on urban design and the city.

Additionally, this year saw a successful joint workshop titled Invisible Cities taken by Honors students. In groups, students visualized the cities described in Italo Calvino's famous book in 2D and 3D formats.

Our student club, Sustainable Urban Initiators (SUI), designed innovative proposals for the future of Songdo, showcasing their visionary approach to urban planning. Our media presence has been strong, with our appearance on the famous YouTube channel "Awesome Korea" featuring UE students and Dr. Idil receiving over 200,000 views. This exposure has significantly raised awareness about our program and its impact.

The end-of-semester exhibition was a success, displaying posters and 3D models created by students from three courses: ARCH 2630, CMP 3270, taught by **Dr. Idil**, and CMP 2010, taught by **Dr. Reazul**. The main subject of ARCH 2630 was "Forgotten Space," and students looked for abandoned spaces in the city to reactivate them through various structures, public spaces, and activities/programs. End-of-Semester Exhibition is where student work becomes tangible, and it is a great motivation for our students to showcase their hard work. It has become a tradition of UE at the end of every semester.

As we reflect on these achievements, we look forward to continuing our mission of promoting sustainable urban living and making a positive impact on our community.



Students Engaging Utah

Dark Sky Studies Minor

Nightscapes Project with Alta School by DSS student Ryan Lenning, Sammi Effner, and Adjunct Instructor Kate Magargal



During the spring 2024 semester, the Nightscapes (CMP 3851) class was invited to work with the Alta School to create greater awareness of the value of darkness at night as the town of Alta plans for its future. Nightscapes students worked with the Alta School (K–8) to create educational materials about the night and night sky of Alta. Students organized into groups and traveled to Alta for the semester to meet with community members and experience the town at night. Students then combined what they learned on these site visits with what they learned in class to produce videos, infographics, and interactive activities, all of which were subsequently compiled into a booklet and video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lzoJyu4Fzk4>). Nightscapes students conducted a final visit at the end of the semester to meet with the Alta School students, deliver the booklet, and teach material from the activities.

Our overarching objective with this project was to cultivate curiosity and enthusiasm for understanding humanity’s relationship with the night, fostering memories that will inspire present and future leaders to protect the natural beauty of our planet. We are optimistic that it will unite the community of Alta in preserving the integrity of its nocturnal environment. We believe that our approach to raising awareness in Alta can serve as a blueprint for similar endeavors in other communities and on diverse subjects.



Master of City & Metropolitan Planning MCMP Professional Projects

This academic year's professional projects showcased various topics, including sustainability, active transportation, historical conservation, housing affordability, and planning for Indigenous communities. These projects, carried out by second-year MCMP students over two semesters, reflect the students' learning and specialization within the program. The hands-on experience allows students to deepen their understanding of empirical planning and gain valuable work experience through collaboration with local organizations. This year, MCMP students partnered with various entities, including the Wasatch Front Regional Council, Salt Lake Neighbors for More Neighbors, NeighborWorks Salt Lake, Utah State Historic Preservation Office, The Gateway Natural Amenity Regions (GNAR) Initiative, Western Water Assessment (WWA), Summit County, Ballpark Community Council, Central Ninth Community Council, Glendale Community Council, Park City Corporation, SLC Department of Public Lands, City of Midvale, Physical Enterprise Planning and Development, Utah Center for Civic Improvement, Murray City, Payson, Sweet Streets Salt Lake City, and University Neighborhood Partners. These projects were conducted in multiple urban settings, such as Salt Lake City, South Salt Lake, Park City, Midvale, Murray, Logan, and Tooele.

Two professional projects stood out this year. **Leota Coyne** and **Kristofer Land** received the Best Professional Project Award in May. Leota's project titled "Trail Etiquette Best Practices: Recommendations for SLC's Be WILD Campaign" involved working with SLC's Department of Public Lands to identify trail etiquette best practices that could be incorporated into SLC's Be WILD initiative. "This initiative seeks to create a positive and respectful culture in our public lands, including trail etiquette. Trail etiquette covers a broad range of issues on trails such as conflicts between users, pet waste pickup, and maintaining trail quality. I completed a literature review and interviewed a dozen communities to learn the best approaches to support positive trail etiquette. Overall, I learned that there are several strategies to create positive trail etiquette including trail design, messaging via signage, and conversations about etiquette. I enjoyed working on this project and it allowed me to dive into an important issue that is one of my professional interests." Professor **Stacy Harwood** served as Leota's advisor.

Kristofer's project, titled "Climate and Natural Hazards Needs Assessment and Tool Development for GNAR Communities," summarizes research performed by The Gateway Natural Amenity Regions (GNAR) Initiative and Western Water Assessment (WWA) that performs a needs assessment to help small and resort towns reach their desired climate and natural hazard consideration level. Seventeen key informants from unique communities with unique problems were interviewed. Informants, from sustainability managers to town managers, described the tools and resources they currently utilize. This report provides recommendations informed by the analysis. Listening to opinions from communities themselves, GNAR Initiative and WWA now have 15 areas of focus moving forward with the needs assessment. Associate Professor **Divya Chandrasekhar** served as Kristofer's advisor.



Leota Coyne



Kristofer Land

Students Engaging Utah

Professional Conferences: MCMP Students Building Connections/Building Careers, written and compiled by Keith Bartholomew

Success in any field depends, in part, on connecting with others working in the same field. Interacting with people doing similar things provides inspiration, ideas, and—most important—opportunities. At professional conferences, people share their work and their excitement about their discipline. They also find out who’s doing cool things and where the possibilities are for advancing in the field. These interactions frequently form the basis for future collaboration, friendship, and . . . employment. Throughout the academic year, CMP students attend conferences—some across the state, some across the continent—making connections and forging careers. Here are a couple of their stories from 2023-24:

2023-24 University of Utah Urbanists (U3) planning student organization leadership team attended the Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting in Washington, DC—**Jeresun Atkin, Justin Delgado, Daniel Ritter, and Meredith Covey**. This trip was funded by the National Institute for Transportation and Community (NITC). Daniel Ritter, MCMP 2024, reflects on the experience: “With over 12,000 attendees, thousands of posters, and hundreds of sessions, TRB [the Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting] is an overwhelming but exciting experience. I particularly enjoyed sessions on mapping and transit data, and I talked with several researchers about their recent work on bicycle networks, which is closely related to my graduate capstone. I also had the opportunity to reconnect with past colleagues at Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, who talked with us about federal active transportation policy and funding.

Outside of TRB, I had a blast showing my friends around DC on foot and by bike—shoutout Capital Bikeshare! I love playing tour guide and it was neat to see the city through their eyes after having lived there myself. [A] connection I made during the conference may have contributed to getting hired for my current job, or at least gave them an initial favorable impression. I knew that someone from the firm was presenting at a poster session (about a project I was genuinely interested in prior to realizing the firm worked on it), so I introduced myself and talked with them for a little while about the project/firm. Just a little anecdote about the power of networking!”



Jessica Long, MCMP 2025, attended the Intermountain Sustainability Summit at Weber State University: “I had the exciting opportunity to attend the Summit. The University of Utah’s Sustainability Office generously partnered with U3 [University of Utah Urbanists] to fund our admission. There were many sessions covering topics such as clean energy, transportation, and housing. I was able to attend sessions presented by Melanie Hall of HEAL Utah, Jon Larsen of Salt Lake City Corporation, Jasmine Walton of NeighborWorks Salt Lake, Marcia White of Wasatch Front Regional Council, and Susan Klinker and Lindsey Love (biogenic building materials). A true highlight was the panel discussion, ‘A Conversation Across Design,’ with Elpitha Tsoutsounakis of the University of Utah, Darren Parry of the Shoshone Nation, Roslynn McCann of Utah State University, and Garth Shaw of GSBS Architects, as well as Jeff Speck’s keynote talk on walkability and Utah City. As a University of Utah Urbanist, I especially enjoyed nerding out at Jeff Speck’s book signing.

Recent Graduates from the PhD in Metropolitan Planning, Policy and Design

Junsik Kim—*Advisor: Reid Ewing*

Junsik Kim’s dissertation focused on identifying the causes and complex relationship between environmental, climate, and health inequity and seeking solutions to mitigate the inequity of climate risks and climate-related health risks focused on green/climate gentrification, building morphology, and policy implementation. The findings consistently showed that the built and natural environment, climate conditions, and climate-related health risk inequity are closely related to each other and have worsened recently, especially for minority groups. Also, the results clearly showed that environmental gentrification can be a major reason, and improvements in environmental conditions and policy implementation can mitigate inequitable climate and health risks. He is scheduled to work as a consultant at the Metropolitan Research Center at the University of Utah this summer and will start as a postdoctoral scholar at UC Berkeley.



Junsik Kim

Sua Kim—*Advisor: Divya Chandrasekhar*

Sua Kim’s dissertation aims to understand how social capital functions during the recovery phase of COVID-19. She approached this through three angles of business social capital. First, she delved into the social networking of Historically Underrepresented Group of Operators (HUGO) businesses, examining how bonding, bridging, and linking social networks supported HUGO in Salt Lake City. She also verified the significant efforts of business support organizations (BSOs) toward HUGO recovery and identified key challenges and complexities of post-disaster BSO operations. Last, she focused on the various forms of social capital within Asian businesses in Manhattan’s Chinatown, highlighting the paramount significance of Asian American identity, community resilience, in-kind support, and the unique reciprocal support systems within these businesses. She started her postdoctoral fellow position at the University of California, Riverside, in the School of Public Policy, examining how to promote the ecosystem for minority entrepreneurs.



Sua Kim



Bruce Parker

Bruce Parker—Advisor: Stacy Harwood

Bruce Parker’s dissertation is about planning in small communities. He argues that the planning profession has overlooked the needs of the nation’s small communities. While each small community is unique, they share commonalities affecting their planning. Planning educators also need an awareness of small community planning complexities to prepare their students for success. This dissertation argues that the planning occurring in America’s small communities is unlike the planning in its larger cities. This research draws on the insights of 273 respondents to a national survey.

New Faculty Hire on Planning with Diverse Communities and Community Engagement



C. Aujean Lee

Assistant Professor **C. Aujean Lee** was hired in Fall 2023. Her work broadly examines the production of racialized spaces and disparities in housing, community institutions, and wealth. Her research has focused on topics such as outsourcing neighborhood planning processes, the impact of police perception on public engagement, community land trusts, and foreclosures and lending disparities. Dr. Lee’s research clarifies when and where socioeconomic outcomes related to the built environment reinforce or disrupt racial inequities, including during times of change and upheaval. Her ongoing research also bridges planning education and practice through her work on diversity, equity, and inclusion issues related to institutional and organizational practices. For example, her article published in the *Journal of Planning Education and Research* examined anti-Asian hate during the COVID-19 pandemic and how local and state governments responded.

Dr. Lee has more than 17 years of experience partnering with nonprofits that serve immigrants and communities of color on community-led placemaking, resistance, and civic engagement. Dr. Lee has been recognized for her community-based approaches through the UCLA Don T. Nakanishi Award for Outstanding Engaged Scholarship and the University of Oklahoma Inclusive Excellence Faculty Grant. She is excited to continue this community engagement in the Greater Salt Lake City region.

This past spring, Dr. Lee taught a new course: Housing Policy and Planning. Students

Faculty Engaging Utah

learned about key issues in U.S. housing planning and evaluated policy arguments. They also worked with NeighborWorks SLC and *West View Media* to collect West Side residents' stories about their housing experiences. The course is also designed to help students better understand housing planning through the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. Students also submitted op-eds to local newspapers about housing issues as part of the course. Four students' op-eds have been published so far in *The Salt Lake Tribune* on unaffordable housing, commuting and housing issues, gentrification, and master-planned developments.

Transit access to outdoor recreation in the Wasatch Front: Riders' experiences

In a study recently published in *Transportation Research Part D*, Associate Professor **Alessandro Rigolon** and PhD program alumni **Keunhyun Park** and **Dong-ah Choi** examined the experiences of riding transit to parks in the Wasatch Front. Rigolon and colleagues sought to understand the motivations, constraints, negotiations, and policy changes for riding transit to outdoor recreation opportunities in the region. The researchers also studied whether individuals experiencing disadvantage (e.g., low-income people, people with disabilities) had specific motivations, constraints, negotiations, and recommended policy changes. This research was motivated by the growing popularity of outdoor recreation in the U.S. West, which has led to serious congestion and environmental issues in parks and protected areas, a rising interest in transit access to parks and protected areas among recreationists, and concerns about disparities in access to nature. Thus, through their study, the researchers aimed to help inform planning for transit-to-parks services in Utah and beyond, especially for the Utah Transit Authority (UTA), which provided funding for the study.

Rigolon and colleagues conducted the study between 2022 and 2023. Their data collection involved interviews with 25 diverse transit riders living in the Wasatch Front. To recruit participants, the researchers reached out to community organizations that organize outdoor recreation activities, connected with groups that work with underserved residents on the West Side of the Salt Lake Valley and conducted outreach on social media. All interviews were carried out via Zoom or phone, and questions focused on their motivations, constraints, negotiations, and policy changes that would help them ride transit to parks and open spaces more often. The researchers then used content analysis to shed light on motivations, constraints, negotiations, and policy changes, particularly seeking to uncover whether answers to those questions were different for people experiencing disadvantage.

The study showed significant interest in transit-to-parks services among participants, who relied on transit for outdoor recreation activities such as hiking, mountain biking,



Alessandro Rigolon

Faculty Engaging Utah

road cycling, skiing, snowboarding, visiting city parks, and more. Despite the limited number of transit-to-parks services in the region (UTA's ski bus and Park City's Transit to Trails shuttle), participants found ways to access outdoor recreation opportunities using other transit services with stops located close enough to such opportunities (e.g., TRAX stops near the Wasatch Mountains' foothills). Overall, the participants showed that reaching outdoor recreation opportunities in the Wasatch Front via transit is quite difficult, and it mostly works for people who are young, fit, and without physical disabilities.

The main motivations to ride transit to parks included the convenience of not sitting in traffic and finding a place to park, as well as environmental concerns. Respondents noted the significant traffic and parking issues of many popular mountain destinations, such as ski resorts and trailheads in the Wasatch Mountains, and said transit helped them avoid the stress of driving and finding parking. Additionally, many interviewees chose transit over driving because they are aware of Northern Utah's air pollution issues and do not want to worsen air quality while traveling to outdoor recreation destinations.

The most significant constraints included the excessive travel time to reach parks via transit, transit frequency, reliability issues and last-mile connection problems. The excessive travel time was mostly due to limited transit service near outdoor recreation destinations and the need to make connections between several transit lines. Last-mile connections were particularly problematic, as interviewees lamented that they often had to walk along busy roads to reach trailheads from transit stops. Additionally, participants living on the West Side of the Salt Lake Valley noted that it takes them a particularly long time to reach outdoor destinations via transit, highlighting disparities in transit services and open space availability. To negotiate the issue of excessive travel time, interviewees carefully planned their routes and trips, which helped them save some time. However, limited information was available for trip planning.

Finally, participants suggested several policy changes that could help address constraints to riding transit to parks. The most popular transit suggestions included summer service in the Cottonwood Canyons (to complement the winter ski bus) and a bus or shuttle providing access to the Salt Lake City foothills, as these destinations see significant congestion in the summer. Interviewees also suggested the need to improve last-mile connections to make them safer for pedestrians and cyclists and more accessible for people with disabilities. Also, a low-hanging-fruit intervention would be to create information or marketing campaigns to raise awareness about transit-to-parks options in the Wasatch Front. Overall, these findings provide evidence for transit agencies and public lands partners interested in promoting transit-to-parks initiatives in Utah and beyond.

Alumni News



Erik Fronberg with Danette Larsen from the Utah Housing Coalition

Erik Fronberg, MCMP '22

I am a Housing and Consumer Protection Analyst for the Housing Stability Division of Salt Lake City. I started at the Housing Stability Division as a student apprentice while completing my MCMP. I currently work on policies and programs outlined in the city's anti-displacement strategy, *Thriving in Place*, including eviction prevention efforts, affordable housing initiatives, and measures of displacement. It has been amazing to see a strategy I started on as a student go from planning to adoption and now to implementation. From 2021 to 2023, I managed the city's \$23 million emergency rental assistance program, which helped nearly 4,000 families stay housed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Working with people facing eviction can be heavy, but we also get to work alongside incredible community-based organizations committed to advocating for our most vulnerable neighbors. One of the highlights of the last year was traveling to Washington DC with the Utah Housing Coalition's Danette Larsen to educate our congressional delegation about housing issues impacting low-income renters. We're doing our best to help Utah renters who face a tight housing market and a legal landscape that often favors property owners.



Jennifer Leslie

Madlyn McDonough, MCMP '21

Summit County won the 2024 APA Small Town and Rural Division (STaR) Vernon Deines Comprehensive Plan/Special Project Plan Award. The team that crafted the Rail Trail Corridor Master Plan included me (Summit County Planner) and MCMP graduate students: **Sophie Frankenburg** (MCMP '22), **Marly Kapacinskas** (MCMP '22), and **Jennifer Leslie** ('23). Over several years, the team worked incredibly hard to create a plan that reflects both community goals and industry best practices. The team held four in-person open houses with 112 attendees, hosted eight online focus group discussions with 44 participants, conducted three online surveys with 1,244 responses, and received 25 community member photo submissions of the corridor. The goal was to create a plan that was easy to implement and user-friendly.



*Bridge on the Rail Trail.
Photo taken by Marley Kapacinskas.*

The plan submitted to APA's Small Town and Rural Planning Division is not meant to remain static. Upon graduation, Jennifer Leslie joined the Summit County Community Development staff as a planner and has worked diligently to ensure that the goals of the plan become a reality. With her support, Summit County submitted a letter of intent to State Parks to take over the management and maintenance of the Rail Trail, which would allow us the opportunity to impact the future of the trail itself as well as the surrounding land. Jenn's commitment and tenacity are inspiring.

This past academic year, **Alex Stewart** (MCMP '24) completed an analysis of trail resources, including a review of information accessibility, regional connections, and economic opportunities associated with the trail to propel this project even further. During the 2024–25 academic year, current MCMP student Jessica Long will work on an Arts and Culture Master Plan for the Rail Trail Corridor, continuing the legacy of partnership between the University of Utah and Summit County.

Working with such dedicated, caring, and insightful students has been, and will continue to be, a delight and a true honor.



Steve Parkinson

Steve Parkinson, BS Urban Planning '98

I started my career in August 2001 and have been busy ever since. I started working for Ogden City as a Planner I, and in 2003, I was promoted to Planner II. As a long-range planner, I helped update six neighborhood and corridor plans as part of the 2002 Ogden General Plan. As a Historic Preservation Planner, I organized, created, and implemented the Local and National Register of Historic Places/Buildings. In 2005 and 2006, I received the Utah APA Award of Merit for Corridor Plan Development (12th Street Corridor Plan) and Ordinance Development (12th Street Corridor Overlay Zone). In July 2006, I joined a small rural community, Clinton City. There, I amended the zoning code regarding off-street parking landscaping requirements, amended zoning regarding buffer yards and streetscape requirements, and helped plan and design a new municipal complex and park.

In June 2014, I moved to Roy City as the City Planner. In that position, I did a complete rewrite of the Roy City Sign Ordinance, revamped all Conditional Uses Permits (CUPs) into Permitted Uses with conditions, a small area plan for Downtown Roy and the Roy FrontRunner Station, annexed six islands of unincorporated county into city and created a new zone for those islands, formulated a Mixed Use (Form Base Code) for Roy Downtown area and for Roy FrontRunner Station area, allowed water-wise/drought-tolerant landscaping in all residential and commercial zones, and updated the Roy City General Plan and Roy Station Area Plan. In 2023, I received Utah APA's Honorable Mention in Public Outreach for Roy City Station Area Plan.

In spring 2025, I will teach CMP's 3100 Planning Theory & Practice, a required Urban Ecology undergraduate course at the University of Utah.

Recognizing Student Success

We truly have the most amazing, compassionate, and invested students. We celebrate their many successes at the end of each spring semester. Congratulations to all graduates, award winners, and scholarship recipients.

BA/BS Urban Ecology Program

Emerging Young Scholar in Urban Ecology Award: **Miles Elkins**

Emerging Leader in Urban Ecology Award: **Mickie Mills**

Robert Farrington Medal for Academic Excellence in Urban Ecology: **Emma Glende**

Master of City & Metropolitan Planning Program

Graduate Student Special Achievement Award: **Justin Delgado, Meredith Covey, Daniel Ritter, Jeresun Atkin** (Service to U3), **McKay Muhlestein** (Service to the Department and College)

Eugene Carr Medal for Professional Promise: **Landon Kraczek**

Robert Farrington Medal for Academic Excellence in Urban Planning: **Fairuz Noshin**

Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award: **Jeresun Atkin, Carlos Santos-Rivera, Jasmine Garcia, Muwaffaq Usman Adam**

Best Professional Project Award: **Leota Coyne, Kristofer Land**

APA Utah Outstanding Leadership & Service Award: **Justin Delgado**

APA Utah Outstanding Academic Performance Award: **Meredith Covey**

APA Outstanding Student Award: **Daniel Ritter**

PhD in Planning, Policy & Design Program

Arthur C Nelson & Clark Ivory Medal for Doctoral Scholarship: **Junsik Kim**

Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award: **Joaquin Lopez Huertas**

Graduate Specializations

Ecological Planning: **Kate Ades, Jasmine Garcia, Anne McNamara**

Economic and Real Estate Development: **Meredith Covey, Connor Dahlquist, Moira Dillow, Kristofer Land, Zeke Peters, Carlos Santos-Rivera, Shreya Shrestha, Connor Stone, Valarie Williams**

Housing & Community Development: **Meredith Covey, Moira Dillow, Kristofer Land, Carlos Santos-Rivera**

Small & Resort Town Planning: **Leota Coyne**

Smart Growth: Land Use, Transportation & Accessibility: **Jeresun Atkin, Leticia Bennett, Leota Coyne, Justin Delgado, Ajla Hadzialijagic, Daniel Ritter, Ana Shinzato, Shreya Shrestha**

Urban Design: **Kate Ades, Connor Dahlquist, McKay Muhlestein**

Recognizing Student Success

Scholarship Recipients

Scholarships awarded by the Department of City & Metropolitan Planning are made possible by the donations given by alumni, local practitioners, firms, and other supporters of CMP. We greatly appreciate your continued support of our students. Below are just some of our scholarship recipients from AY23-24.



Muwaffaq Usman Adam

Muwaffaq Usman Adam — City & Metropolitan Planning Scholarship

“Given the multidimensional nature of urban planning, I always believed that experiencing different planning systems would enrich my knowledge and expertise. The scholarship allowed me to focus entirely on my studies and immerse myself in the learning opportunities available. It enabled me to participate in professional conferences such as the APA Utah, access essential resources, and engage in enriching extracurricular activities. Beyond financial support, the scholarship instilled a sense of validation and motivation. I am profoundly grateful to the Department of City & Metropolitan Planning for awarding this scholarship. It has transformed my academic journey and brought me closer to achieving my dream of advancing the planning system in Ghana.”



Dorsa Azadi

Dorsa Azadi — City & Metropolitan Planning Scholarship

“I am incredibly grateful to have received the CMP scholarship, which has significantly impacted my academic journey. This scholarship has provided me with the financial support needed to focus on my studies and projects, as well as giving me some space to enjoy my free time, refreshing my mind when I am not studying. This has resulted in increased productivity in my program. The CMP scholarship has not only eased my financial burden but has also motivated me to work harder and contribute meaningfully to the field of transportation, which is my main interest.”



Noah J Carlson

Noah J Carlson — National Institute for Transportation and Communities Scholarship

“Receiving the Summer CMP Scholarship at the final stretch of the spring semester kept me engaged with my studies. I am grateful for the sponsors, donors, faculty, and alumni who made this award possible. This scholarship has allowed me to keep the momentum going and apply it towards the Listening to Herriman Project as part of the planning summer workshop course. This opportunity has alleviated my financial burden and presented me with community engagement experiences to guide my interests and possible career paths.”



Arthur Shraer Fainkitch

Arthur Shraer Fainkitch — National Institute for Transportation and Communities Scholarship

“A huge factor in determining my continuation at the U into the 4+1 program was the tuition. I was ecstatic and incredibly honored to find out that I had received a scholarship for the 2024 summer semester. It has allowed me to take a core course at a discounted rate, which has eased my anxiety and facilitated my decision to go forward with my education into graduate school! I am thankful to the City & Metropolitan Planning Department for granting me this scholarship, and I’m unbelievably excited to see what the next two years have in store.”



Haechan Gim

Haechan Gim — Inoway Scholarship

“Receiving the Inoway Scholarship from the Department of City & Metropolitan Planning at the University of Utah has been transformative for my academic and professional journey. As a senior from Korea studying urban ecology, this scholarship has provided critical support that has allowed me to fully immerse myself in my studies and research. Receiving this fellowship in my final semester as an undergraduate makes it even more special. It comes at a pivotal moment as I consolidate years of learning and prepare to transition into the professional world. I am committed to applying the knowledge and skills I have gained to make a meaningful contribution to the field of urban planning and sustainability. Thank you for this incredible opportunity.”



Ryan Hunter

Ryan Hunter — National Institute for Transportation and Communities Scholarship

“I was honored and grateful to learn that I received a scholarship. Even after years of saving money, the cost of attending graduate school made me question if it was the correct path. This scholarship has provided me with the financial means to focus my attention on my studies and opportunities that will prepare me for a career in planning. Deciding to continue my education in the MCMP program has been one of the best decisions I have ever made, and it would not have been possible without the help I have received along the way.”

Recognizing Student Success



Mickie Mills

Mickie Mills — National Institute for Transportation and Communities Scholarship

“The summer scholarship I received is an awesome gesture from the department, and I am thankful to have been selected for it. It has substantially affected my financial circumstances and has helped me focus on academic pursuits. I am grateful for their support. It not only eliminates some monetary constraints related to the cost of academia but also helps to amplify my involvement within the department by creating an additional path for scholarly engagement. This scholarship epitomizes the CMP department’s unwavering dedication to cultivating academic excellence and supporting the scholarly endeavors of urban ecology undergraduates.”



Fairuz Noshin

Fairuz Noshin — City & Metropolitan Planning Scholarship

“With the help of the scholarship, not only could I focus on my studies better, but I could also cope with the new environment of a foreign country. The aid also kept me motivated toward my goal in the program, which eventually helped me to achieve my desired academic result. Knowing that I had the backing of the CMP program gave me a sense of security and belonging, and I felt more integrated into the academic community, which further eased my transition.”



Mustapha Osman

Mustapha Osman — City & Metropolitan Planning Scholarship

“The scholarship has allowed me to concentrate on my coursework at the U. Now, I look forward to completing my degree and helping advance the cause of creating livable, equitable, and sustainable communities for all. Thank you for your kindness and for believing in my potential.”



Talon Wade Roberts

Talon Wade Roberts — National Institute for Transportation and Communities

“I am truly grateful. Being a first-generation student in my family, I wasn’t sure if I could ever afford to attend a graduate program. However, these scholarships have greatly supported me and have helped make attending graduate school a reality. Thank you, NITC and the CMP department, for supporting my education, research, and goals.”



Ana Shinzato

Ana Shinzato — City & Metropolitan Planning Scholarship

“I will be forever thankful for the opportunity the City & Metropolitan Planning scholarship has provided to my professional path. As a Brazilian woman, pursuing a master’s degree at the University of Utah was a distant idea, but it became possible and achievable because of the scholarship. Now that I have completed my degree and started my professional path as a transportation planner, I hope that, in the future, I can demonstrate my gratitude for helping communities become more sustainable, livable, and equitable. Thank you!”



Justice Prosper Tuffour

Justice Prosper Tuffour — Nelson-Ivory Scholarship

“Dreams do come true! A heartfelt gratitude to the incredible donors of the City and Metropolitan Planning (CMP) and Nelson-Ivory scholarships! Your generosity fuels the dreams of young scholars like me, enabling us to collectively chase our dreams and academic excellence with passion. Thanks to this support, you are breaking ground for a first-generation college student from the African diaspora (Ghana) to realize his doctoral dreams. Thank you for being the champions of my academic journey!”

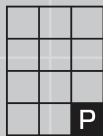


Julie Williams

Julie Williams — National Institute for Transportation and Communities Scholarship

“Receiving scholarship assistance for grad school was a transformative milestone in my academic journey. Without this crucial financial support, affording graduate studies would have been impossible for me. The scholarship allowed me to fully immerse myself in learning and professional development, free from the constant worry of how to pay for my education. Since graduating, I have secured an amazing and fulfilling job, a testament to the opportunities this scholarship provided. I am incredibly grateful for the assistance that has helped me achieve my career goals.”

For more information about giving to one of our scholarship programs, contact Peter Moes, CA+P development director, at 801-646-7848 or peter.moes@utah.edu or go to College of Architecture + Planning CMP General Scholarship Fund: <https://ugive.app.utah.edu/designation/6>.



City and
Metropolitan
Planning

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