

Course Focus

HORT 440: Urban Design and Planning

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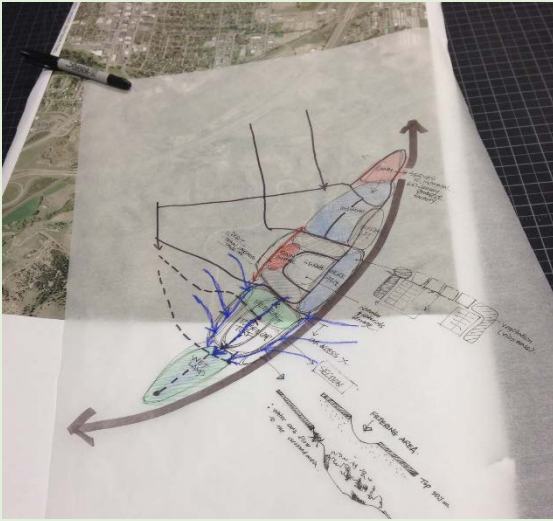
Lewis Mumford wrote, "Each generation writes its own *biography* in the cities it creates." An overarching learning objective for HORT 440 is to build an understanding of the ways that design and planning at the city and neighborhood scale impact issues such as, walkability, social justice, ecological function, landscape quality, public health, and agricultural preservation – elements that help describe the *biography*. This course serves as an upper division studio course in the Landscape Design option. The course was developed in 2013 to help fulfill the need for students in the landscape design curriculum to build an understanding of landscape design issues and concepts at the community and regional-scale. You may not know that landscape designers and architects are often the lead or partner on a design team for public streetscapes, neighborhood development, and land planning projects! So, this type of course is essential to equip students for these potential settings.

The first part of the semester introduces urban landscape design by exploring topics including city planning history and theory, neighborhood form and design, street design, sustainable urbanism, and biophilic cities. The second part of the course delves into local design projects, with a focus on site assessment and master planning.

In the first design challenge, students analyze and develop design recommendations for re-envisioning College Street between 11th and 8th (which is identified in the capital improvement plans for the City of Bozeman). Students are charged with improving pedestrian connectivity and the street experience, making visible stormwater management and landscape processes, and engaging community. This project presents students with many typical constraints they would encounter with projects embedded within the urban fabric, including: overlapping site uses for pedestrians, cars, utilities, and parking; limited and disturbed spaces to incorporate plants, furnishings, or drainage; and a diversity of adjacent land owners and building uses.

The second design challenge focuses on neighborhood or district design, where students develop a plausible solution (master plan) for the future of a large space typically looking out about 25-50 years. This year's 150-acre project site incorporates the property owned by Idaho Pole, between Front St. and I-90, the railroad, and remnant wetlands north of Main Street near I-90. This project site is a complex one, which lends itself to more in-depth site assessment and evaluation of

existing and historical environmental, cultural, and physical characteristics. Working at this large scale, students learn how block and lot layout, street design, and land use relationships impact the “open” spaces in between, which, in turn, are the spaces where we design specific landscape and planting plans.



Student iteration for developing a master plan schematic drawing.

This is one of my favorite courses that I teach. My hope is that each student leaves the course understanding how landscape design is integrated within their communities beyond the residential and commercial property context.