

2023

OUUDS  
Urban Design Studio

Annual Report

*Sidewalk Shade Study  
Sketch by Sonu Malla*





*2023 Urban Design Graduates  
L to R: Roshita Taylor, Courtney  
Graham, and Sonu Malla*

# Forever PLAD!

No, that is not a typo! The Urban Design Studio is now part of the Gibbs College of Architecture, **Division of Planning, Landscape Architecture, and Design, or PLAD**. The new division also includes the college's growing Bachelor of Science program in Environmental Design. This move makes a lot of sense. The undergraduate program will feed students looking to join the division's graduate and professional programs through a preparatory curriculum. To capitalize on this new relationship, the Urban Design Studio has already applied to create **an accelerated program to afford BSED students the opportunity to complete their studies in five years**, four years in Norman, and one year in Tulsa. The consolidation also allows the programs to share courses, collaborate on research, and work closely with the Institute for Quality Communities. So, joining PLAD has inevitably brought some changes, but other things will never change, like the studio's commitment to serving our graduate students and community partners through service-learning projects at OU-Tulsa.



*Views of OU-Tulsa created by Tulsa's Urban Sketchers*





The Aspen Landing Project Team poses with City of Broken Arrow leadership after presenting their final recommendations at the city council meeting on August 15, 2023



Urban design student Preslie Watkins Anderson crosses a stream during a site visit to Aspen Landing



Urban design students engage Broken Arrow citizens with a visual preference survey for Aspen Landing activities at the Broken Arrow City Expo

# Studio Projects

## Aspen Landing

Broken Arrow's Indian Springs Sports Complex has a hidden gem — a mile long shoreline along the north bank of the Arkansas River. **The Aspen Landing project allowed stakeholders to dream about expanding access to the water front and adding new features to the park.** Urban design students worked closely with the city's placemaking office, park stakeholders, and local residents **to identify ways to attract and retain visitors with new passive and active uses.** The resulting waterfront plan includes a boardwalk with rides, games, and restaurants, in addition to a swimming hole, fishing pier, and ziplines for the adventuresome. Walking trails, wetlands, and a kayak launch provide connections to nature. Other proposed improvements include a dog park, an amphitheater, and a playing field expansion to host regional soccer tournaments. The students also reconfigured park roads and parking to improve safety, comfort, and convenience.

*The studio wishes to recognize the members of the stakeholder committee:*

Farhad Daroga AICP  
Chairperson, Placemaking Manager,  
City of Broken Arrow

Hon. Christi Gillespie  
Vice Mayor, City of Broken Arrow

Phil Hink  
Parks Superintendent,  
City of Broken Arrow

Lori Hill  
Director of Tourism and Economic  
Development, City of Broken Arrow

Travis Kelly  
General Manager,  
Broken Arrow Youth Baseball

Kevin Maevers  
Community Development Director,  
City of Broken Arrow

Barbara Wilson  
General Manager,  
Broken Arrow Soccer Club

Amanda Yamaguchi  
Planning and Development  
Manager, City of Broken Arrow





*The boardwalks of Aspen Landing converge along the banks of Haikey Creek and the Arkansas River*



The urban design students prepared a technical report and design vision that they presented to Broken Arrow citizens. **The students designed Aspen Landing around five organizing principles:**

- ➔ Optimize and Expand the Existing Park
- ➔ Connect to Destinations with a Trail System
- ➔ Conserve and Enhance the Natural Environment
- ➔ Create a Destination to Attract and Retain Visitors to Broken Arrow
- ➔ Develop Scenarios for Aspen Avenue

**Their recommendations were adopted by the Planning Commission in June and by the Broken Arrow City Council in August.** The city hopes to fund the Aspen Landing Improvements with future capital improvement bond issues and partnerships with businesses and user groups.





**The South End's primary land use is surface parking,** presenting both an opportunity and a threat for the future



## The South End

The South End lies in a strategic position for the revitalization of downtown Tulsa. This underutilized part of the city's urban core encompassing the Cathedral District and Gunboat Park has over twenty blocks of parking lots and vacant land owned by educational and religious institutions. Building on previous studies done by studios led by Andrés Cavieres PhD and Xiaobo Quan PhD, urban design students are engaging the district's property and business owners to **explore ways to transform the South End into an urban district with up to 3,000 new housing units, as well as shops, services, parks, and public spaces** to support the new residents. Students created a collaborative urban design game for two groups of stakeholders to play at a workshop on November 8th. The result is two urban design frameworks to be developed next spring. This project is sponsored by the newly formed City Design Studio and Department of City Experience at the City of Tulsa and the Downtown Tulsa Partnership. Special thanks to Cynergy for hosting meetings at their offices in the district.

**The Urban Design Studio wishes to thank the following project partners:**

*Blake Ewing*  
Mayor's Chief-of-Staff,  
City of Tulsa

*Juniper Hentz*  
Urban Design Planner,  
City Design Studio  
City of Tulsa

*Ellen Ray AICP*  
Managing Director, City Design  
Studio, City of Tulsa

*Emily Scott AICP*  
Director of Planning and Vitality,  
Downtown Tulsa Partnership

*James Wagner AICP*  
Director of City Experience,  
City of Tulsa

*Josh Chesney AIA*  
Principal and  
Chief Development Officer,  
Cynergy





*The Society of Urban Design Students prepare for Parking Day on September 18th. The fun event to repurpose seldom used parking spaces was organized by Downtown Tulsa Partnership and **sponsored by Coracle Coffee and Scraps Design.** Both sponsors are businesses founded by studio students and alumni.*

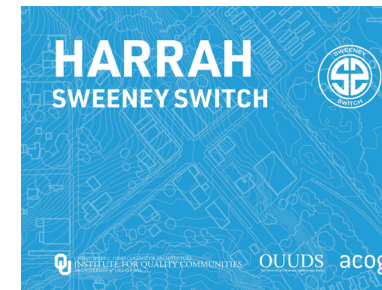
## Placemaking

Exciting things continue to happen on the placemaking front:

➔ Harrah's **Sweeney Switch Downtown Plan** was honored when the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments, or ACOG, **received the Wohlbruck Impact Award from the National Association of Development Organizations** for the Community Economic Resiliency Initiative.

➔ A detailed cost estimate prepared by Landplan Consultants for the plaza and bus depot in the **Global District** designed by urban design students in Fall 2022 was presented to possible funders in June.

➔ After a long pandemic delay, **the Chapman Green finally received its new pergola!** Special thanks to Steelshade Pergolas, Project for Public Spaces, and the City of Tulsa for their perseverance to accomplish the project, and sincere thanks to the University of Tulsa for the final piece of funding.



*Partnership with ACOG and IQC wins national award*



*Plaza Santa Cecilia rendering*



*Finishing touches for the pergola at Chapman Green*





## Bridges for All

Sonu Malla's design section for the Cincinnati Avenue Bridge



Sidewalk  
10' wide

Buffer zone  
10' wide

Bike lane  
6' wide

Drive lane  
22' wide (11' each lane) (2-way)

Bike lane  
6' wide

Buffer zone  
10' wide

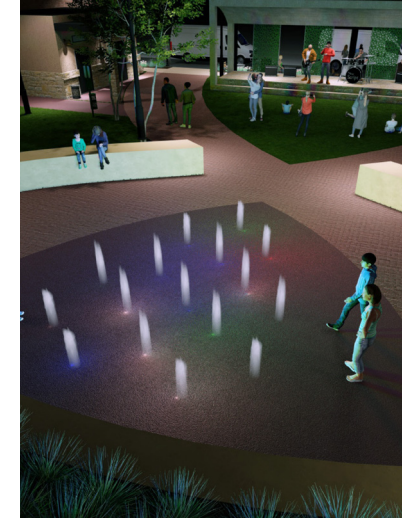
Sidewalk  
8' wide

## Professional Projects

The professional project is the capstone experience for the Master of Urban Design degree. Students are encouraged to select projects combining research and creative activity. The following projects were completed this year:

➔ Downtown Tulsa Partnership is in the midst of improvements for the Boston Avenue Bridge and Center of the Universe plaza. **Sonu Malla** helped them expand their project to include the other four bridges spanning the rail lines in downtown Tulsa. **Bridges for All** makes the crossings safer, comfortable, and interesting for all modes of travel.

➔ **Courtney Graham's** professional project hopes to make **Hunt's Green** a venue for events in downtown Muskogee. As Main Street Muskogee Executive Director, she possesses the wherewithal to make it happen. She is transforming the space with DIY placemaking techniques and pursuing grants for permanent improvements.



Rendering of Hunt's Green for Muskogee Main Street by Courtney Graham



Downtown Tulsa mural photographed by Roshita Taylor for Paint the Town Mural





The Jean-Pierre Chouteau Trail runs along the scenic Verdigris River



Kendall-Whittier is split in two halves by Interstate 244



Time bank members paint house numbers on curbs in Crosby Heights

→ For her project, **Paint the Town Mural**, **Roshita Taylor** created an interactive website using story maps to document public art in downtown Tulsa. The site is linked to curated content for self-guided tours by visitors.

Three students started their projects this fall:

→ Running for 53 miles along the Verdigris River and Kerr-McClellan Inland Waterway, **the Jean-Pierre Chouteau Trail** offers opportunities for recreation, camping, birdwatching, and much more. **Dylan Siers** is partnering with INCOG transportation planners and stakeholders including the Army Corps of Engineers, the Creek and Cherokee Nations, and several counties and towns on a project to revitalize the trail, add amenities, and help it live up to its potential.

→ **Tyler Duncan's** professional project is part civil engineering, part landscape architecture, and part city planning: in other words, a true urban design project. He hopes to **reconnect the Kendall and**

**Whittier neighborhoods** with a land bridge spanning Interstate 244. The proposal connects new housing on the north side to the thriving business district on the south side, while improving safety for pedestrians, ameliorating the physical barrier of the highway, and reducing traffic noise.

→ Not all urban design projects focus exclusively on the design of physical improvements. **Preslie Watkins Anderson's** project is aimed at the social side of urban design. She has launched **Tulsa Time Bank**: <https://tulsa.timebanks.org/>. A time bank allows city residents to exchange skills, knowledge, and services based on the amount of time to perform those services, rather than using money. Her goal is to see if a time bank can inspire Tulsa residents to take actions to improve their public spaces and build social capital together. The time bank has already partnered with local nonprofits, like Up with Trees, and neighborhood associations, such as Crosby Heights, on several improvement projects, cleaning up lots, planting trees, and painting curb numbers.

*The studio wishes to recognize the faculty serving on our Professional Project Committees:*

Shawn Schaefer AIA AICP  
Associate Professor of Urban Design

Dave Boeck AIA  
Associate Professor of Architecture

Francesco Cianfarani PhD  
Assistant Professor of Architecture

Shideh Shadravan PhD  
Associate Professor of Architecture



Tulsa Time Bank logo by Preslie Watkins Anderson



# Urban Design Studio



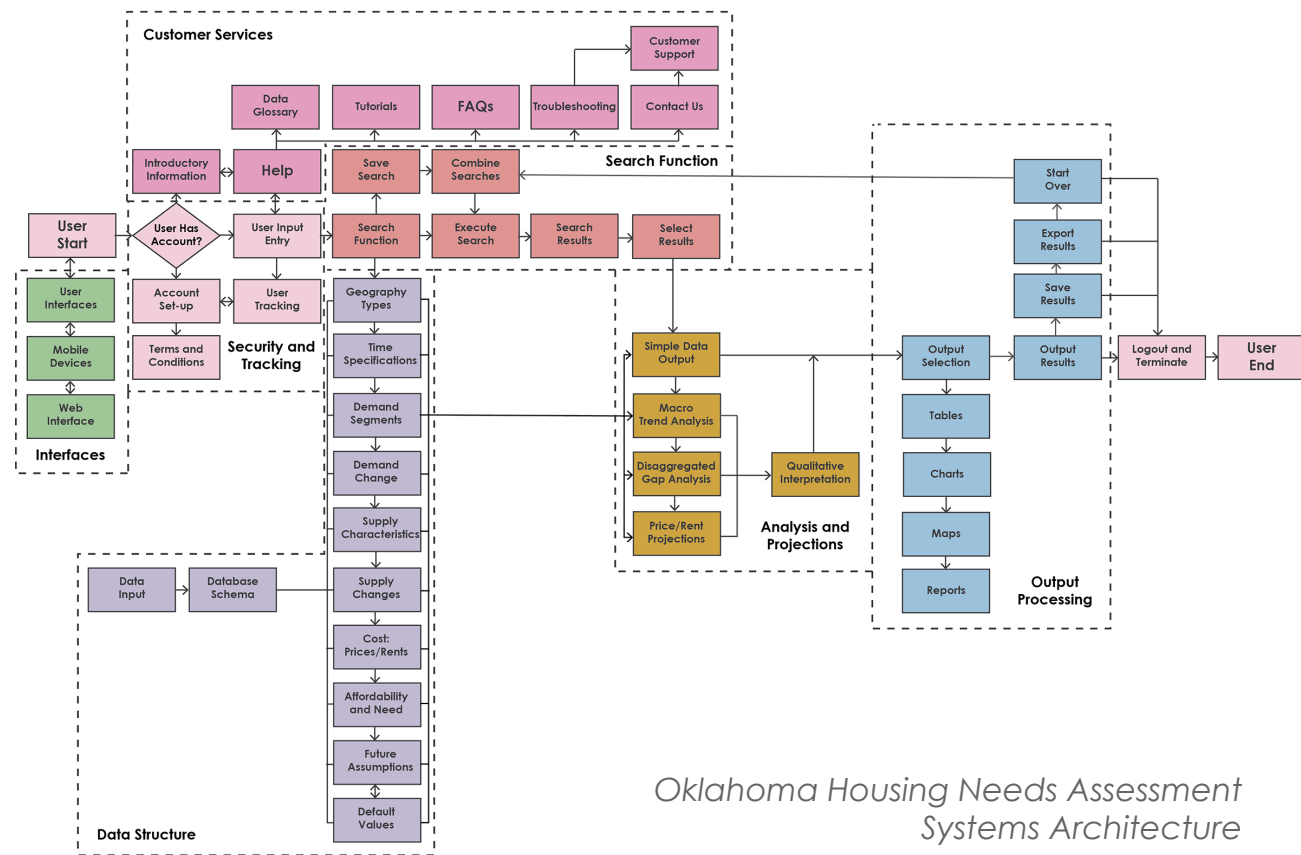
**Urban Sketchers**  
Tulsa

**Our Manifesto:**

1. We draw on location, indoors or out, capturing what we see from direct observation.
2. Our drawings tell the story of our surroundings, the places we live and where we travel.
3. Our drawings are a record of time and place.
4. We are truthful to the scenes we witness.
5. We use any kind of media and cherish our

Urban design students joined Tulsa's Urban Sketchers on November 4th for a day devoted to drawing our campus!





Oklahoma Housing Needs Assessment  
Systems Architecture

# Research

## Oklahoma Housing Needs Assessment

Funded with a **\$925,000 grant from the Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency (OHFA)**, a multi-disciplinary team from the Gibbs College of Architecture, the Gallogly College of Engineering, and the Center for Intelligent Transportation Systems has been working on the Oklahoma Housing Needs Assessment all year. The effort began with an extensive user engagement effort. **Reseachers were featured at many events including Affordable Housing Day at the Oklahoma State Capitol, the Oklahoma Coalition for Affordable Housing Annual Meeting, and the Commercial Real Estate Summit.** The team also conducted interviews with planners, housing developers, and real estate experts. This engagement process, combined with case studies of similar assessments, led to the development of a systems architecture in the form of a searchable database, data analytics, and interactive web portal. The team began alpha development in the summer and are now halfway through initial product development.

### Research and Development Team:

Ron Barnes PhD  
Gerald Tuma Presidential Professor of  
Electrical and Computer Engineering

Francesco Cianfarani PhD  
Assistant Professor of Architecture

Shane Hampton AICP CNU  
Past Director of the Institute  
for Quality Communities

JoeBob Havlicek PhD  
Williams Presidential Professor of  
Electrical and Computer Engineering

Shawn Schaefer AIA AICP  
Associate Professor of Urban Design

### Graduate Research Assistants:

Preslie Watkins Anderson  
Tyler Duncan  
Vasu Janapala  
Rajith Kedarisetty  
Bhavesh Kilaru  
Sonu Malla  
Inamullah Mohammad  
Kalyan Mutukundu  
Carmen Magaly Pate



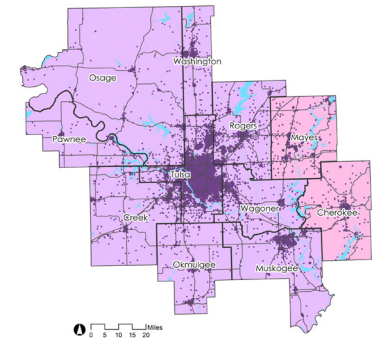
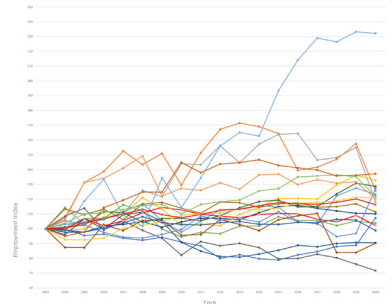
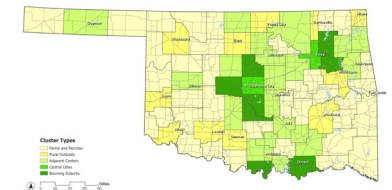


**Shane Hampton conducts an audience response survey with members of the Oklahoma Coalition for Affordable Housing in May**

User engagement does not end after the prototyping phase, but will continue throughout the life of the study. **The team's minimal operable product, or MOP, can now perform gap and trend analysis for three different geographies:** counties, metropolitan areas, and statewide. The team hopes to add a cluster analysis and market segmentation tool soon. The MOP is being used with real-time audience response surveys to gain user feedback. Users will be selected for several rounds of beta testing next spring. **The team hopes to have a public release by late summer of 2024.**

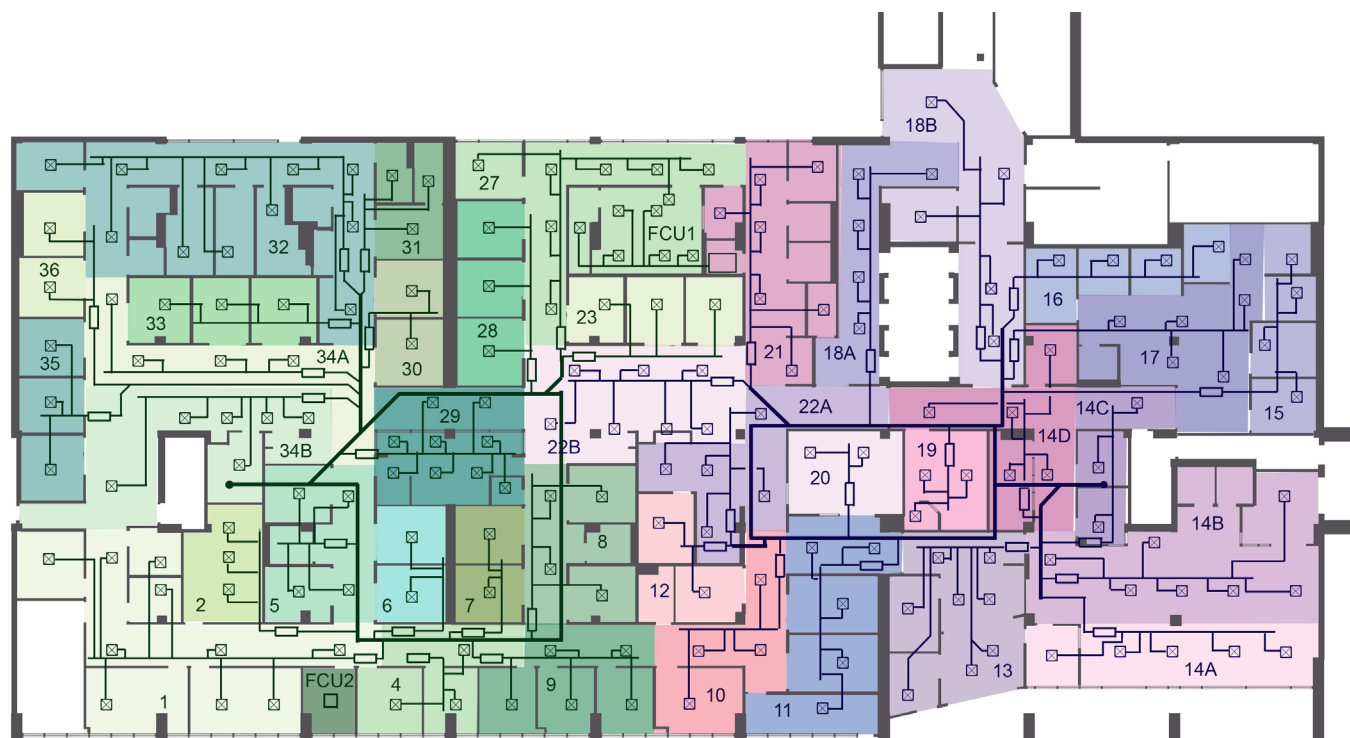
### Shift-Share

Using employment data collected as part of the housing needs assessment, Professor Schaefer produced an ancillary study: **A Comparative Analysis of Sectoral Employment and Industry Structure in Tulsa and Northwest Arkansas.** The study uses shift-share analysis of labor markets to explain which industries in a region are growing or shrinking. The study was provided to the new OU Polytechnic Institute to assist them with program development.



Charts and maps created for the housing assessment and shift-share analysis





*Air distribution diagram of the Emergency Department at Hillcrest Hospital. Its two large vertical air-handling systems made it difficult to separate the zones for Covid patients*

## Community Health and Environmental Design Initiative

The CHED is a community resource promoting health and wellness through better environmental design of buildings, neighborhoods and cities. Our motto is **Better Health by Design.**

➔ Professor Schaefer delivered his lecture on environmental determinants of health to the **School of Community Medicine Summer Institute** for the thirteenth year.

➔ CHED researchers from the Gibbs College of Architecture and the School of Community of Medicine have submitted a paper to the **Journal of the American College of Emergency Physicians Open** examining how hospital administrators and staff transformed their emergency department to cope with the coronavirus pandemic.

➔ Professor Schaefer published a paper in **Frontiers of Education** with colleagues from the Early Childhood Education Institute.



*CHED is grateful to faculty from many disciplines contributing to its efforts:*

*Michael Birkes AIA  
CHED Coordinator*

*Dave Boeck AIA  
Architecture*

*Bo Burns MD  
School of Community Medicine*

*Joshua Gentjes MD  
School of Community Medicine*

*Brandon Konigsknecht MD  
School of Community Medicine*

*Xiaobo Quan PhD  
Architecture*



## Noteworthy



John Tankard with his class after their final presentations



Paul Dentiste with his family

- The Urban Design Studio **welcomed John Tankard AICP, to the faculty.** Perhaps Professor Tankard's greatest claim to fame is the distinction of being the Principal Planner and author of both the Oklahoma City and Tulsa Comprehensive Plans. He taught Geographic Information Systems for Land Use Planning in the fall.
- **Paul Dentiste, is still going strong at 92.** The former PCAB member and friend of the studio was recently spotted at a night out on the town with his wife, Mary, and granddaughter, Leighanna, a senior at Lehigh University. Best wishes, Paul!
- A project stemming from **Chris Paulsen's professional project of 2020** is now being implemented by classmate **Jessi Stringer, 2020**, with the expert assistance of Landplan Consultants. The Depot Green will be a \$4.4 million park and farmers market in downtown Collinsville, where Ms. Stringer is city planner.

- KKT Architects led by **2004 alumna, Sarah Gould AIA**, was honored with a **2024 Pinnacle Award as a Corporate Champion.** The firm was selected for their service to the community, and promoting an equitable workplace.
- TSW's Tulsa Office led by Urban Design Studio Professional and Community Advisory Board (PCAB) member **Katy O'Meilie PLA** received the American Planning Association's **Davidoff Advancing Diversity and Social Change Award** for *Our Legacy, Our Community: A Renewed Vision for North Tulsa*. The master plan for Greenwood / Kirkpatrick Heights was recognized for its strong community involvement.
- Rounding out the award winners is another PCAB member, **Farhad Daroga AICP**, the long-time city planner and placemaking manager for the City of Broken Arrow. The **Broken Arrow Chamber of Commerce** presented him with their **Chairman's Award** for his over forty years of vision and service to the city.



Collinsville Depot Green by Chris Paulsen



Farhad Daroga, AICP





Blake Ewing, Tulsa Mayor's Chief-of-Staff presents a proclamation to Theron Warlick, left, on the occasion of his retirement.

- It was **good job hunting for the studio's 2023 graduates**. **Roshita Taylor** has joined the City of Claremore as Assistant Planner. **Courtney Graham** is the Executive Director for Muskogee Main Street in her home town, and **Sonu Malla** is doing her optional practical training at the Tulsa Planning Office.
- Studio alumni are stepping into new leadership roles at the City of Broken Arrow. **Amanda Yamaguchi, 2016**, has been promoted to Planning and Development Manager. **Joel Hensley AICP, 2019**, is joining her as Senior Planner after nine years with the City of Tulsa.
- Congratulations, to **Heloisa Ceccato Mendes, 2008**, on her promotion to Senior Planner for the City of Calgary, Alberta. **She will be leading the City Building Team**, overseeing the update of the Municipal Plan, Land Use Bylaw, and Complete Streets Policies.
- **Theron Warlick AICP, 2002** retired from the City of Tulsa after 23 years as Urban

Strategist and City Planner. Mr. Warlick was instrumental in both the city's PlaniTulsa Comprehensive Plan of 2008, and the creation of the Pearl District. **Tulsa Mayor G.T. Bynum proclaimed October 1, 2023, Theron Warlick Day.**

- **Welcome back to Ellen Ray, AICP!** The Tulsa native is returning after a distinguished consulting career in Austin to take the helm as **Managing Director of the City Design Studio (CDS)**. The Urban Design Studio looks forward to working with her and the CDS on future service-learning projects. Current urban design student **Marshall Berry** will be embedded at the CDS starting next spring.
- Last, but not least, **many thanks to the Oklahoma Chapter of the American Planning Association and President Dawn Warrick AICP** for sponsoring study breaks for urban design students each semester. The informal gatherings bring together students and planners to share some food and conversation. These are great opportunities for students to learn about the profession and make connections for the future.



Ellen Ray, right, joins Richard Wansley PhD, from Boston Avenue Methodist Church, in an urban design game to re-envision Tulsa's South End.





**Urban Design Studio alumni** were well represented at the Oklahoma State Planning Conference in Enid last February. L to R: **Erik Enyart, 2010**, Director of Planning, Tanner Consulting; **Brent Isaacs, 2009**, Housing Planner, Oklahoma Mental Health Association; **Jessi Stringer, 2020**, City Planner, City of Collinsville; **Amanda Yamaguchi, 2016**, Planning and Development Manager, City of Broken Arrow; **Larry Curtis, 2012**, Community Development Director, City of Bartlesville

## People

### Professional and Community Advisory Board

Michael Birkes AIA  
Principal, Michael Birkes Architecture

Tom Costner MD  
Retired Director of Palliative Care,  
St. Francis Health System

Farhad Daroga AICP  
Placemaking Manager, City of Broken Arrow

Carly Weinreb Finer  
Real Estate Development Manager, Charney Properties

John Griffin RA, CNU, Chair  
Associate Principal and Urban Designer, Narrate Design

Tony Lombardi  
Principal Broker, Frisbie Lombardi Commercial Real Estate

Katy O'Meilie PLA, LEED AP, Secretary  
Senior Associate, TSW Planners, Landscape Architects

Tom Wallace PE, SE  
Founder, Wallace Engineering

Dawn Warrick AICP  
Associate Urban Planner, Freese and Nichols, Inc.

### Faculty

Shawn Schaefer AIA, AICP  
Paulina Baeza  
Michael Birkes AIA  
Jennifer Griffin RA  
Nick Lombardi CCIM  
Lou Reynolds JD  
John Tankard AICP  
Greg Warren PLA

### Graduate Students

Preslie Watkins Anderson  
Marshall Berry  
Elizabeth Carroll  
Tyler Duncan  
Courtney Graham  
Soujanya "Sonu" Malla  
Carmen Magaly Pate  
Dylan Siers  
Roshita Taylor





*Tulsa is fortunate to have some great urban fragments from its early days. Sadly, the brick building on the left that housed Lowood's Grill and the eponymous Hodge's Bend, was lost to fire this fall. Preserving old structures and updating them to meet modern codes is a high urban design priority.*

## Contact Us

The Urban Design Studio is always looking for promising students and interested community partners for its programs and projects. Please contact us for more information:

The University of Oklahoma  
Christopher C. Gibbs College of Architecture

### **Urban Design Studio**

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The University of Oklahoma Urban Design Studio is founded on its three-part mission: to **train urban design professionals** through graduate programs in urban design and real estate, to **advance understanding of the city** through research and creative activity, and to **engage in community design** projects benefiting Tulsa and the State of Oklahoma.

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