

SURP 2024 YEAR IN REVIEW



School of Urban and Regional Planning | Department of Geography and Planning | Queen's University at Kingston

Directors Message

I am delighted to write this letter to you—my first as SURP's 7th Director.

Professor John Meligrana stepped down as Director in July after leading the School through the extraordinarily challenging pandemic years with calm competence and good humour. John is now enjoying a well-deserved leave, recharging his batteries to return to full-time teaching and research.

The 2024-25 academic year is off to a great start. Dr. Carolyn DeLoyde joined SURP as a tenure-track Assistant Professor in July. Professor DeLoyde has already made an immediate impact at the School, enhancing the equity, diversity, and inclusion components of our core curriculum and enriching our environmental planning courses with her extensive professional experience in the field.

Last year, SURP successfully relaunched two of its outstanding international experiential learning opportunities: an India project course and a student exchange program in New Zealand. This year, we are working to expand our international offerings with another India project course and additional student exchange opportunities.

Prof. David Gordon continues to take first-year M.Pl. students, or "newbie SURPers," on educational and fun-filled field trips to Toronto, Montreal, and Ottawa. A new highlight this year was Hamilton, the site of the 2024 OPPI conference.

Our students continue to impress, winning highly competitive awards from CIP and OPPI this year. Additionally, 7 SURPers were awarded Tri-Council grants to conduct research for their Master's Reports and Theses.

Employment prospects for SURP graduates remain strong. Nearly all students secured paid professional internships in the past two years, and over 95% of graduating students found professional employment within six months of completing their M.Pl. degrees. We are deeply grateful to the School's alumni for their invaluable support of our internship program.

Finally, the future of SURP looks brighter than ever, as our alumni continue to make extraordinary contributions to planning Canadian communities.

My best wishes to you for a successful career and a healthy, happy life ahead.



Dr. Ajay Agarwal

Associate Professor, MCIP, RPP
Director, School of Urban and Regional Planning
Department of Geography and Planning, Queen's University

STUDENT NEWS

SURP Students win multiple National, Provincial and local Awards

Makenna Humes MPL'24 received the Canadian Institute of Planners' Outstanding Graduating Student Award. Makenna is now a planner with the City of Toronto.

Caley Savage MPL'25 was awarded the Gerald Carrothers Scholarship, which "assists in furthering planning education and recognizing graduate student members who are making a positive contribution to their communities". Caley also won SURP's Stanley Lash Award for Best Paper submitted in a SURP course for her paper on "*Zoning, Land Use, and Discriminatory Practices*"

Current doctoral student **Rachel Barber** MPL'23 received the PlanON Innovative Research Award for her MPL thesis, "*Aging but not Forgotten: An Analysis of Older Adult Health Care Access in Elliot Lake*". This award celebrates innovative academic researchers within the planning profession. Rachel also received the Geography and Planning Department Award as the outstanding Teaching Assistant.



Rachel and Caley received their OPPI Awards at the Hamilton conference SURP Students win National Urban Design Competition



National Capital Commission's National Urban Design Challenge Leah Dykstra, Chloe Bullen, and Nvar Jaf.

SURP Students win National Urban Design Competition

SURP students **Leah Dykstra** MPL'25, **Chloe Bullen** MPL'25 and **Nvar Jaf** MPL'25 won the National Capital Commission's National Urban Design Challenge - "*Re-Imagining the LeBreton Flats Park District*". See the [presentation ceremony](#).

The award-winning plan:



Project Courses

Every year, teams of our MPL graduate students work with local government coaches, with local clients on real planning and development projects that the clients have indicated are high priorities.

In 2024, SURP is collaborating with:

- Auroville Foundation (India), Pathway to Unity: Assessing the Social Impacts of Auroville on Surrounding Communities
- The City of Ottawa, A Vision for the Algonquin Station Area- a suburban Transit-Oriented Development project
- The Baxter Creek Watershed Alliance, Baxter Creek Watershed Studies



Internal Project Course Team in Auroville, India



City of Ottawa staff and SURP students discussing draft designs for the Algonquin Station area project course.



Planning Students doing fieldwork in the Baxter Watershed project course.

International Education and Research:

Many student did research and exchanges in Brazil, Paris and New Zealand.

Three of the Population and Place Lab's team went to São Paulo, Brazil in April to conduct fieldwork. **Marley Gryfe** MPL'24, doctoral student **Janine Dodge** and **Jennifer Rodriguez** MPL'25 posed with Brazilian colleagues. Professor **Maxx Hartt** and the team also presented their research at The Association of the Study of Play conference in March 2024 in Rochester, NY.



Nick Burnie (MPL'24) spent the winter term on exchange at the University of Otago's planning school (above) in Dunedin NZ, combined with exciting travel.

FACULTY NEWS

Dr. Maxwell Hartt was promoted to Associate Professor, with tenure and also completed his accreditation as a Registered Professional Planner (RPP). Maxx has developed the [Population and Place Lab](#) into a busy hub of research activity attracting graduate students and co-authoring many articles and books. His research profile was rewarded with an appointment as has been appointed as an Associate Editor of one of the world's leading planning journals: the *Journal of Planning Education and Research*.

Professor Patricia Collins continued her SSHRC-supported research on the impacts of school closures, with new articles in the journals *Wellbeing Space and Society* and *Canadian Geographer*. Professor Collins is taking a well-deserved sabbatical in Fall 2024 and will return to teaching in January 2025.

Professor Ajay Agarwal was elected Vice-President/President-elect of the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute, a binational organization promoting academic collaboration between India and Canada. Ajay also hosted a campus visit from the Indian High Commissioner to Canada.

Professor John Meligrana stepped down as SURP Director in July after leading the School through a pandemic and re-accreditation. He is enjoying an administrative leave to recharge his batteries for more teaching and research in January.

Professor David Gordon's three new refereed articles on planning the Canada's suburban landscape served as the basis for articles in the *Globe and Mail*, *La Presse*, *The Conversation*, TVO and the *Winnipeg Free Press*. After the explosion of misinformation on 15-minute cities, CBC Radio invited him to make a cross-country series of broadcast interviews explaining the concept in 12 cities. Dave continues to teach a range of courses, edit Canadian Planning and Policy, lead field trips, and convene alumni gatherings. Students and alumni recently surprised him with a birthday party in Hamilton.



SURP faculty retreat

NEW FACULTY MEMBER

The most important news for 2024 is that **Dr. Carolyn DeLoyde** RPP MCIP was appointed as a tenure-track Assistant Professor after an international search. Carolyn is a SURP graduate with over two decades of professional experience in environmental and land use planning. She is a skilled teacher, with many years' experience as a university instructor, most recently within the undergraduate geography and Master of Science in Planning program at the University of Toronto. Professor DeLoyde has already revamped our planning theory course, expanding its emphasis on equity, diversity and Indigeneity and will be updating

environmental planning courses in the upcoming term. Her infectious enthusiasm is a great addition to the atmosphere at the School.

Dr. DeLoyde's current research is focused on cities and the natural environment, Natural Heritage Systems, and community engagement. She is currently working with Dr. Betsy Donald on Kingston in Focus, an online interactive dashboard created by Queen's University in collaboration with the City of Kingston. The project has already attracted financial support from the university's Fund for Scholarly Research and Creative Work.



Dr. Carolyn DeLoyde RPP MCIP was appointed as a tenure-track Assistant Professor

ALUMNI NEWS

A historic moment in Calgary in February - the Vice Chair, Chair, and Principal Planner of the Calgary Planning Commission were all SURPers: **Thom Maler** MPL'89, **Teresa Goldstein** MPL'03, and **Steve Jones** MPL'02.



Left to right: Thom Maler, Teresa Goldstein, Steve Jones

Congratulations to SURP grad **Josh White** (MPL' 07), who was appointed as Vancouver's chief planner. Josh was previously Director of City Planning for Calgary, and visited the School last year to recruit planners.



Josh White

SURP is small but mighty - we are Canada's smallest planning school, but our graduates are now chief planners for St. John's, Calgary, Ottawa, and Vancouver.

Gaetan Royer, MPL '87, has made the Maclean's 2024 Power List. He is the CEO of MassiveCanada. His company has found a way to produce prefab apartments, townhouses, and laneway houses made of engineered mass timber. His company has found a way to deliver larger-scale housing cost-effectively (compared to steel and concrete) to the consumer while also being easy to assemble.



Gaetan Royer

Rachel Barber MPL'23 received the David Edney Research Travel Award. Rachel travelled to Paris, France, this past summer, as a visiting doctoral student at the École des hautes études en sciences sociales (ÉHESS). She is continuing her dissertation research and working in collaboration with colleagues at ÉHESS on a comparative study of shrinking and aging cities in France and in Canada.



Rachel Barber

SURP Takes to the Streets with Alumni Guides

SURP alumni recently led field trips for students in Professor Dave Gordon's Land Use Planning course.



Tony Gkotsis MPL'13 (Queen's Director of Campus Planning and Real Estate) discussed site planning issues with graduate students at the new Endaayaan-Tkanónsote residence. The project incorporated two heritage houses and a mid-rise infill building with sustainability and Indigenous landscape features. The complex won a 2023 Livable City Design Award.



Hugh Gale MPL'79, (retired City of Kingston planner) spoke about the the key planning issues for the proposed rezoning of this site near Chalmers Church. Hugh later acted as the tribunal chair while the graduate students role-played the professional participants in a mock planning appeal panel.

ALUMNI NEWS

Alumni Guides for Field Trips

SURP students enjoyed field trips to Ottawa, Toronto, Montreal and Hamilton in the Fall term, while Adjunct Professor **Carl Bray** gave weekly Kingston walking tours in his community design course.



SURP alumni Tyler Wood MPL'09 (MEM museum) and Michael Szilagyi MPL'10 (Re: Public Urbanism) lead a walking tour of downtown Montreal.



SURP students and Dave Gordon at the lookout on Mount Royal

Alumni and Students at conferences



Great gathering of SURP alumni and students at the CIP national conference in Edmonton



Over 80 SURP alumni and students attended the Ontario Professional Planners Institute conference in Hamilton



SURP Alumni and Student Reception in Hamilton, during the OPPI conference