

Housing Design Report Portfolio

This collection of coursework highlights a series of innovative housing and community development projects, each addressing diverse housing needs, sustainability, and enhanced community engagement across Oregon. These projects, conducted in partnership with various cities and nonprofit organizations, showcase the application of design, policy analysis, and community planning in real-world contexts, contributing to the advancement of affordable and sustainable housing solutions.



What is the Sustainable City Year Program?

The Sustainable City Year Program is an innovative university-community partnership program founded by the Sustainable Cities Institute at the University of Oregon in 2009-10. In this unique model, existing courses, faculty, and students from across campus are purposefully directed toward a single Oregon community over an academic year to address vexing issues identified by the partner. SCYP and the students, faculty, and communities it engages with are an example of Oregon innovation, leadership, and how leveraging resources can contribute to meaningful, additional, and society-wide value. SCYP creates a conduit for translating knowledge into practice, and provides significant workforce development opportunities for students, adding 'hard' and 'soft' skills and hands-on experience to all levels of students' education.





FALL 2020

Image Credit: Middle Housing by Opticos Design

Decreasing Barriers to Missing Middle Housing in Hood River, Oregon

Partner: City of Hood River
Instructor: Rebecca Lewis

Project Description: Hood River would like to develop mixed-income and diverse housing types to accommodate continued growth and address housing affordability. The report builds on the 2016 Housing Needs Analysis and subsequent planning for the West Side Concept Area. Students sought to identify and mitigate potential opposition to housing developments and recommend changes to the development code and messaging tools to support diverse housing types.

Recommendations & Final Report:

Zoning & Development Code

- Allow Diverse Housing: Adopt form-based codes for a variety of housing types.
- By-Right Development: Permit multi-family housing without special approvals.
- Environmental Standards: Set standards to favor multi-family over single-detached homes.

Public Engagement

- Engagement Process: Use proactive, diverse outreach methods beyond public hearings.
- Consultant: Hire a neutral third-party to facilitate engagement.
- Housing Task Force: Create a diverse task force to recommend policies and projects.

Housing Initiatives

- Workforce Housing: Develop deed-restricted housing for local workers.
- Missing Middle Housing: Focus on duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes within the current urban growth boundary.



WINTER 2016

Image Credit: City of Redmond

Meeting the Housing Needs of Redmond, Oregon: Suggestions for Providing Affordable Housing

Partner: City of Redmond

Instructor: Ren Thomas

Project Description: Due to substantial population growth over the past decade, the City of Redmond has been struggling to adequately meet housing demand. A tight housing market also increasing the cost of the existing housing stock, pricing many low-income or minority groups out of the city. To support an update to Redmond's Affordable Housing Plan and identify affordable housing policies, student's researched the city's housing climate, including identifying barriers to affordable housing within Redmond and the surrounding area, and suggesting the policy changes to address these barriers. Students conducted interviews with local stakeholders and analyzed existing policies, and reviewed best practices from other regions and recommended both short-term and long-term policy changes to align with their proposed five key objectives:

1. Increasing and diversifying the housing stock
2. Addressing stigmas against affordable housing
3. Pursuing regional solutions
4. Enhancing public participation
5. Fostering collaboration

Recommendations & Final Report:

Short-Term Strategies (5-10 Years)

- Systems Development Charges Waivers: Exempt affordable housing developers from certain development costs
- Affordable Housing Trust Fund: Support affordable housing projects financially
- Redefine Dwelling Units: Adjust definitions to include diverse housing types
- Gap-Financing: Provide funds to cover gaps in affordable housing projects
- Outreach and Awareness: Educate the community about affordable housing

Long-Term Strategies (10-15 Years)

- Consolidated Plan Changes: Revise housing plans for better regional solutions
- Housing Dispersal: Distribute affordable housing throughout the city
- Inclusionary Zoning: Require a percentage of new developments to be affordable housing
- Affordable Housing Advisory Committee: Form a committee to advise on policies
- Employer-Assisted Housing: Encourage employers to provide housing assistance
- Clear Standards: Adopt clear standards for housing development applications

Other Recommendations

- Rest Stop Ordinance: Allow individuals experiencing houselessness to camp overnight on specific City lots
- Prioritize Affordability in Comprehensive Plan: Integrate affordable housing into the City's comprehensive plan



WINTER 2011

Image Credit: Wei Yan

High Performance, High Density, High Ambitions: Housing for the Salem Housing Authority

Partner: City of Salem

Instructor: Peter Keyes

Project Description: Students worked with the City of Salem and the Salem Housing Authority (SHA) to reimagine public housing. Students designed housing that respects its inhabitants while being economically, environmentally, and ecologically sustainable. The project emerged from challenges like population growth, housing market uncertainty, sprawl, and the need for sustainable resource use. Students took a unique approach, focusing first on understanding the context before designing and then developing prototypes for rooms, units, and buildings based on local contexts and proposed infill and redevelopment plans for SHA properties: Orchard Village, Meadowlark Village, and Glen Creek.

Recommendations & Final Report: The students' recommendations included promoting dignity and identity, using passive design strategies, ensuring resilience and high performance, and integrating local food production. These proposals aimed for high-density, low-rise buildings that could enhance SHA properties and align with Salem's goals of accommodating growth while optimizing land use. The recommendations emphasized long-term value, improved performance, and reduced costs, offering the SHA a chance to create safer, more sustainable, and more supportive living environments that align with broader City goals.