

## Newsletter Spring 2024

It's a wrap for the Spring 2024 semester! Read on to learn more about our students' and faculty's best work and get the latest updates from the Department of Urban & Regional Planning, home of San Jose State University's programs in Urban Planning, Geography and Masters of Public Administration.

### Congratulations to the Class of 2024!

It was a very happy occasion at the Student Union Theater on May 23: 43 graduates of the MUP and Geography M.A. programs from the Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 semesters were celebrated for their accomplishments. With over 125 family and friends in attendance, the faculty presenters gave an overview of each graduate's Masters Research Report topic and presented awards and scholarships to both continuing students and graduating students. Prof. Jeff Hare also presented Rotary Club Awards to graduates whose research focused on urban planning strategies to improve San Jose.

Chris Burton, the Director of Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement for the [City of San José](#), gave the keynote address and shared anecdotes about the evolution of his career as an urban planner. Following Mr. Burton, Scott

Karoly entertained and inspired the attendees as the ceremony's Student Speaker, selected by a vote of the graduating students. Next, Prof. Kelly Snider presented the

Friend of the Department Award to Alex Shoor who founded [CatalyzeSV](#) and who has hired many of our department's recent and current students. Melissa Ruhl, class of 2015, was presented with the Outstanding Alumna Award for her notable achievements in the field of transportation planning.



Professor Lester encouraged graduates to embrace instincts from two great planning thinkers. He reminded them to think boldly, like Daniel Burnham—who famously urged us to “make no little plans”—while also recalling Jane Jacobs who famously stood down the bulldozers of Urban Renewal, and to be as inclusive as possible.

## Data & Democracy Workshops

CAN ~~TECHNOLOGY~~ [Human-Centered] Technology  
DEFEND DEMOCRACY?  
YES, YOU CAN.

PUBLIC INTEREST TECHNOLOGY  
Data & Democracy Workshops



The [Spatial Analytics and Visualization Institute \(SAVI\)](#) is launching [Data & Democracy Workshops](#) in August 2024 in partnership with [Public Interest Technology University Network](#)! This workshop series empowers officials, policy pros, and researchers through learning Python, R, and Opensource. Graduates will receive a completion badge.

## Spring Symposium



The [Urban Planning Coalition](#) hosted the annual Spring Symposium. This year's topic was career mapping and helping connect students and professionals. We had several energized speakers who inspired the incoming cohort of students to be a generation of leaders in a time when leadership is needed to address climate change, wealth inequality, and social justice.

## New Publication

Dr. Shishir Mathur, professor of urban and regional planning, has released a new book! "Development Charges - Funding Urban Infrastructure in India and the Global South" is available now through [Cambridge University Press](#). Dr. Mathur is also co-chairing the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning ([ACSP](#)) Doctoral Committee and serving as track chair for the [ACSP Conference](#), which will be held Nov 7-9 in Seattle.

## Department Student Research Endeavors

### Heritage of Resilience

Documenting the Historical Narrative of the Five Wounds Urban Village Plan Update Area

Graduate students Rachel Dubois (MA Geography) and Nhu Nguyen (MUP) collaborated on a [StoryMap to present the findings of the Five Wounds Historic Resources Survey for the City of San José](#), with the guidance of Professor Rick Kos. The StoryMap features an immersive retelling of how the area's rich immigrant histories shaped its built environment and cultural landscape. Viewers can explore an aerial swipe map illustrating the village's temporal development and learn about significant historical buildings through a map tour.



#### Want to become a certified drone pilot?

MA Geography student Henri Brillon, President of the [SJSU GIS & Drone Society](#), has prepared a [study guide](#) for those who want to prepare themselves for the FAA's 14 CFR Part 107 exam. Commonly known as "Part 107," this certification is mandatory for anyone wanting to operate unmanned aircraft for commercial or research purposes in the United States. The SJSU GIS & Drone Society is a place for the SJSU community to discuss and learn about GIS and using drones for science. Join our [Google Group](#) (click "Ask to join group") or follow us on [LinkedIn!](#)

## NEW FACULTY PUBLICATION

Dr. Shishir Mathur

SJSU SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY

DEVELOPMENT CHARGES  
Funding Urban Infrastructure in India and the Global South

Shishir Mathur



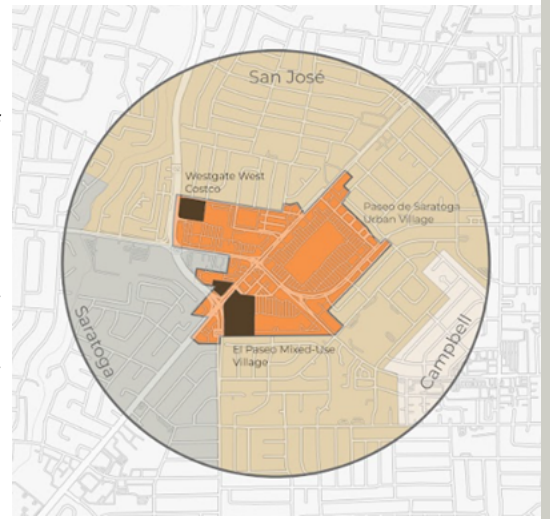
Endorsement by  
Professor Bish Sanyal, MIT:

"An essential reading for both scholars and practitioners searching for innovative ways to generate new revenue for better urban management."



## Department Student Research Endeavors (cont.)

Students in Professor Rick Kos's Capstone Studio course embarked on an assessment of southwestern San Jose in partnership with Vice Mayor Rosemary Kamei and her staff. The location, which the students dubbed "The Three Places", is distinguished by its location at the intersection of three cities: San José, Saratoga, and Campbell. The Vice Mayor charged the students with developing recommendations to improve mobility and safety conditions in this neighborhood. To accomplish this, the student team first conducted a comprehensive study of current conditions (a community assessment) and then, in the second phase of their work, engaged nearly 200 local residents and businesses to ascertain their concerns and aspirations for The Three Places. Additionally, the class organized a highly successful inter-jurisdictional discussion with elected officials from the three cities. Professors Kos and Douglas will lead a new student team in Fall 2024 to continue these discussions and deliver final recommendations to all participants.



MUP student Cindy Adrian participated in the installation of the San Pedro Square street mural, "Threads Woven," at the end of the spring semester. This piece was created by local artist Jimmy Paints in partnership with the nonprofit [Local Color](#) SJ, the [San Jose Downtown Association](#), and Adobe. The colors and shapes of the mural represent the different cultures and communities in San Jose. "This was a meaningful experience for me as a community member who lives within walking distance of San Pedro Square, a San Jose native, and an SJSU urban planning student," Cindy noted. "Through this experience, I was able to meet local artists and different members of the community. I also learned about great organizations like SJ Local Color and all the work they do to support local artists. As an MUP student with one semester under my belt, this experience has helped me solidify how happy I am to be working towards a career in urban planning."



MA Geography students Owen Hussey and Henri Brillon built an augmented reality sandbox! This geography education tool projects topographic contour lines onto the sand surface using an Xbox Kinect sensor and open-source software running on Linux, courtesy of [UC Davis' Oliver Kreylos](#). See it in action in [this video](#) or reach out to Henri or Owen to request an in-person demo.

If what we do matters to you, please [contribute!](#) Your tax-deductible gift demonstrates that you believe in our 54-year teaching legacy. Your gift demonstrates you care about helping our students graduate and succeed, as well as supporting class projects that allow our students to learn through service to local communities.

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