Niehoff Urban Studio

Academic Applied Research and Design

The Niehoff Urban Studio is a unique interdisciplinary initiative undertaken to address urban issues that challenge the quality of life in Cincinnati. The studio endeavors to engage the community in an urban problem solving effort. The studio is located off-campus in Corryville and includes classroom, meeting, and exhibit areas. In 2002-06 almost 300 students in urban planning, architecture, design, and urban geography participated and more than 500 community stakeholders visited the studio to interact with students and attend public events and presentations.

The Niehoff Studio is a place for the University led but community driven study and discussion of urban issues for the benefit of Cincinnati and other urban centers. It is a place where University and non-university participants can come to participate in educational classes, events, symposia, and exhibits that explore these urban issues. The Niehoff Studio is a unique and innovative off-campus classroom in which an interdisciplinary group of university students and faculty can interact with community stakeholders to study and experience, first hand all aspects of the urban issues relevant to the city center. The work of the Niehoff studio is intended to have a tangible impact on the urban problems under consideration and will contribute to the body of knowledge of research in this area.

Food and Urban Quality of Life

During 2002-2004, students and faculty of the Niehoff Urban Studio examined a wide variety of design issues related to productions, distribution, and consumption of food within the Cincinnati. This work included more than twenty community, municipal, and industry partners and yielded more than forty student design projects.

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Sponsorship

This project has been made possible through the generous support of Mr. and Mrs. H.C., Buck Niehoff, the Harriet R. Williams Downey Fund, the Ohio Urban University Program, the Robert and Adele Schiff Family Foundation, and the University of Cincinnati, in collaboration with the Schools of Architecture and Interior Design, Planning and the Taft Research Center. The Niehoff Urban Studio is administered by the UC DAAP Community Design Center.

2002-2004

OVER-THE-RHINE PROJECT

During 2004-2006, students and faculty of the Niehoff Urban Studio examined a wide variety of issues related to urban quality of life in Over-the-Rhine and Center City ranging from transit to green housing opportunities. This work involved the participation of nearly fifty community groups and yielded nearly seventy student design and research projects for the use of our community partners.

2004-2006

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Transit Development

Providing multi-modal transit options in transit-oriented development.

Distribution

New Urban Supermarket Models and Applications

Food Retail in Mixed Use Development Strategies

Research the Effects of Food in Public Spaces

Production

Urban Agriculture and Community Gardens

Green Urban Housing

Adaptive Re-use

Reclaiming the Pleasant Street district as a sustainable neighborhood.

Over-the-Rhine Project

Food Retail in Mixed Use Development Strategies

Community

Urban Places

Visioning new housing districts near Vine Street

Urban Ecosystems

Reclaiming the Mill Creek Valley as a green and sustainable redevelopment area.

Rethinking the Kaufman Brewery for use by the Cincinnati Black Theater

Saving the Kaufman Brewery for use by the Cincinnati Black Theater

Cluster Housing

Increased Sense of Security

Maintain Character

Maintain Local Character

Civic Pride / Political Involvement

Amenities

Within Walking Distance Community Gathering Spaces

More / Diverse Set of Amenities

Visioning Lifestyles

Encourage Walking

Community Accessibility

Better Access

Eliminate Auto Dependency

High End Housing

Decent Housing / Urban Renewal

Cluster Housing

Increased Sense of Security

Maintain Character

Maintain Local Character

Civic Pride / Political Involvement

Amenities

Within Walking Distance Community Gathering Spaces

More / Diverse Set of Amenities
Mission
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Objectives and Outcomes
Research on Urban Issues: Students and faculty engage in academic research on specific urban issues and topics.
Applied Research for Design Projects: Interdisciplinary teams of students explore, develop, and recommend strategies and design solutions to address specific urban problems.
Community Development and Service Learning: Faculty and students work with community groups and stakeholders to collaborate on strategies and design proposals that have a timely and tangible impact.
Public Education: Public symposia, presentations and exhibits are sponsored to provide a forum for public discussion of urban planning, design, and quality of life issues for the urban center.

2006-2008
HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
During 2006-2008, students worked closely with four of the Uptown Communities to envision community development alternatives that would support new and expanded housing opportunities within a framework of revitalized neighborhood business districts, enhanced cultural and social institutions, new recreational and greenspace offerings for an improved quality of life.

Housing Opportunities
Working with developers, and practitioners, students created new models for underserved sectors such as affordable workforce housing and university linked retirement communities.

2008-2010
GREAT STREETS AND GATEWAYS
During 2008-2010, the studio directed its focus through place-based regional economic development strategies which call for the revitalization of street and highway infrastructure as a framework for community development, economic growth, quality of life, and environmental improvements. Working with eight communities and city staff, students envisioned alternative redevelopment models.

Commercial Models
Alternatives for office and retail sites for new and expanded commercial development opportunities.

Brownfields
Remediation and Redevelopment Students illustrated novel approaches to reusing obsolete manufacturing and industrial areas for reuse as commercial, residential, and recreational centers for sustainable community life.

Roadways
Alternative alignments for arterials and highways.

Community Resources
Community stakeholders provided guidance for students to map assets and tensions within the complex uptown communities to facilitate strategic planning.

Urban Fabric
Reconnecting Systems Students sought new models for reconnecting roadways to enhance functionality and environmental quality.

Mobility and Green Infrastructure
Movement alternatives and environmental opportunities Transportation alternatives were studied within the context of changing urban form and the possibilities that come with a green infrastructure.