Niehoff Urban Studio
Academic Applied Research and Design since 2002
The Niehoff Urban Studio is a unique interdisciplinary initiative undertaken to address urban issues that challenge the quality of life in Cincinnati.
The Studio is a resource for the University led but community driven study and discussion of urban issues for the benefit of the city. 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. Work of the 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.
The studio is administered by the Community Design Center and is located off-campus in Corryville and includes classroom, meeting, and exhibit areas.

Community Design Center
Technical Service since 1986
The Community Design Center organizes collaborative interdisciplinary community university partnerships for the research and design of physical improvements which serve the University's urban area.
The Center provides assistance to community groups, non-profit organizations, and City departments that are representing underserved areas and underfunded projects within the area. The Center is administered by a registered Architect with assistance from co-op students and graduate assistants from a variety of disciplines.

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In 2012 the work of the Niehoff Urban Studio bridged two thematic cycles. Spring 2012 brought to a close the “Place Matters” theme of comprehensive community development in which the Covington Center City Action Plan was the focus of collaborative student work with residents, community based organizations, city officials and their professional consultants. Studio work explored the application of Liveable Community principles in this mature urban community.

Fall 2012 work initiated the “Metropolis and Mobility” theme which considers issues of movement within the region and urban core. The studio worked directly with a consortium of regional transit interests on Bus Rapid Transit and with civic advocacy groups for Bike trail design. Studio work is focused on the technical aspects of designing for these modes of travel as well as the often overlooked associated development that can occur.

Technical Service and Events

Technical Service projects continued to include food related design work as it has since the 2002 studio food theme. Two projects returned to the Over-The-Rhine area for planning project. A Mobility research project that brought together an interdisciplinary group of faculty was initiated as a complement to the 2012-13 studio theme.

The CDC facilitated a design competition and an ideas competition with outside partners focusing renewed attention on the benefits of urban living. Sixteen public events showcased topics on urban design, economic sustainability, community service, and other issues.
Covington Center City Action Plan

In the winter and fall quarters of 2012, interdisciplinary teams of civil engineering students and urban planning students studied the center city of Covington, Kentucky as a part of the Place Matters program theme of comprehensive community development. Covington is an important part of the metropolitan urban center, but suffers from significant physical, social, and economic disadvantages. This work was a continuation from the Fall 2011 quarter by invitation of the City of Covington and the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) to contribute to the Covington Center City Action Plan and to collaborate with national and local urban development consultants including Kinselman Kline Gossman and Denver-based Progressive Urban Management Associates. This effort, structured through a HUD livability grant, aims for a comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach to community development. The students analyzed the area and conducted case study research on which they based urban framework, urban design and programming proposals. These proposals focused on five themes: Complete streets/great streets, Connectivity, Housing, Economic development and Public space. This course was led by Dr. Richard Miller of the College of Engineering and Professor Frank Russell of the College of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning. In parallel with studio work Professor Elissa Yancey of the UC Journalism Program facilitated a storytelling seminar among her students, partner Holmes High School photo-journalism students and key community stakeholders that informed the Action Plan. Studio and seminar students ended the project with a community open house and exhibit at Covington’s Artisan’s Enterprise Center.

Research and Reconnaissance

Research and Reconnaissance work of the studio was structured around the six livability areas stipulated in the Federal Liveability Program. This organization was inherently comprehensive and interdisciplinary as designed collaboratively by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Department of Transportation (DOT). Using this approach students observed and analyzed aspects of Covington and the surrounding subregion. The focus of this observation was put on six areas including transportation, housing, economic competitiveness, supported communities (parks, civic life), policies and leverage, and valued communities (health, safety).

Urban Framework

Each team was assigned a specific research topic and sub-topics relating to the stated issues of the Covington stakeholder group and relative to subtopics of six livability principles. The research was developed using a case study method in which student teams identified and documented existing projects that illustrate an assigned sub-topic: connectivity, complete streets, economic development, housing, community services and public space. Interdisciplinary student teams then developed an overall concept or urban framework for the sub-topic within the center city study area.

Design Projects

After completing the urban framework plan students were divided into teams which focused on each of the five stated sub-topics to develop the following specific urban design, planning, and engineering proposals.

Transportation: Complete Streets

Streets that support and promote walking:
In order to support all forms of movement in the pedestrian realm, improvements to the right-of-way could were proposed to support and promote walking throughout the city for benefits in health, sociability, commerce, and multi-modal capacity.

Streets that support biking:
Beyond providing additional multi-modal capacity, an established biking culture was envisioned that could have both identity and economic benefits for Covington when considered with all its ancillary retail and recreational activities.

Streets as greenways and green infrastructures:
Students redesigned the streets and alleyways of Covington into greenways and greenspaces with additional trees and landscaping that would improve the visual environment, but would also address energy consumption, storm water runoff, and environmental pollution.

Streets that support navigation, orientation, and appreciation of urban assets:
A comprehensive wayfinding system as well as a redesign of important intersections and “gateways” addressed the difficulty in orientation and navigation in downtown Covington.
Transportation: Connectivity

Streets as specific activity corridors:
Pike St. was recommended to be reused in a new live-over-work land-use concept compatible with artists, designers, and micro-scale office. 6th St. could be made into a unique linear eco-village centered on Mutter Gottes. MLK-12th St. would take advantage of its existing boulevard concept by lining it with a formal arrangement of mid-scale apartment blocks with supporting commercial uses.

Programming for connectivity:
A "cultural trail" that connects Covington's scattered historic sites, museums, library, and other cultural assets was proposed by students.

Infrastructure for connectivity:
A new shuttle system or an extension of the Southbank Shuttle was proposed to connect entertainment and cultural areas. A pedestrian-bike bridge was envisioned at sixth street to accommodate movement and serve as an event destination. An aerial tramway was proposed to connect Devou Park, Mainstrasse, and Madison Avenue.

Removing barriers to connectivity:
Observation of the barrier effect of the elevated railway in Covington led to proposed modifications of the existing railway underpasses to provide better perceptual and functional connections.

Housing

Housing as a strategic redevelopment tool:
Market rate housing near the Licking River was proposed to take advantage of the views and access to this natural asset. An extension of the Mutter Gottes residential neighborhood into the blocks west of the existing IRS complex, was seen as a way to provide a much-needed new construction, river-near market rate housing product.

Housing as a complementary use:
The forthcoming proposed Gateway Community College Campus at the center of the city invited proposals for complementary student housing, located in and around the likely campus site at Greenup and 6th streets.

Amenities to support new and existing housing:
A network of pocket parks throughout the city would satisfy a stated need for more greenspace in Covington. Lack of a full service grocery north of 12th/MLK was also seen as a deficit and markets were proposed in several locations in either new construction or taking advantage of the adaptive reuse of existing vacant large footprint buildings.

Economic Competitiveness

Economic Development to strengthen existing areas:
A student proposed linking existing cultural venues such as the library, the Carnegie and the Cathedral with small scale design, art, and art retail uses in an economically sustainable and synergistic "cultural corridor" along Madison Avenue.

Economic Development in Adaptive Reuse:
Another proposed redevelopment would preserve the historic Brewery building on 12th street within a mixed use plan with a medical arts function affiliated with St Elizabeth’s hospital to the south. A redevelopment proposal for the Duro Bag site which would create open space around the Cathedral at 12th while reorganizing the manufacturing buildings to the south for a performance venue and municipal office buildings.

Economic Development in remaking districts:
One student concept calls for extending the entertainment promenade found in Mainstasse, along a protected pedestrian promenade north into the west end of 4th and 5th streets. It would be protected from the heavily traveled 4th and 5th street and support upper level residential uses that would have views and direct access to the riverfront.

Public Space

Public Space from left over areas:
The elevated railway and the unwinding underpasses could be improved by using the green fringes of the railway corridor to link together a verdant green ribbon of space within the city. The monumental but blighted rail trestle at the river's edge was modeled to be a sculptural focal point for an urban park which would be framed by new residential and commercial uses.

Public Space as a strategic development tool:
One student team proposed a consolidation of surface parking into a two level structure which would open up public green spaces framing the Mutter Gottes Church. Another proposal envisioned a well formed green space around the new Gateway College Campus.

Public Space reclaimed at the water's edge:
A new linear park proposed on the Covington side of the Licking River was envisioned to stimulate new housing development along its framing edge and connect the heart of Covington to the natural corridor extending far south up into the Licking River valley.
Journalism Project

In parallel with studio work, eleven Journalism students spent the spring quarter profiling unique Covington stakeholders to better understand the civic life of Covington. These university students partnered with four Covington High School students from the Center for Great Neighborhoods Youth Art Program who photographed the residents. Together the students developed compelling stories about the lives and hopes of these special stakeholders.

UC journalism students wrote stories about the people of Covington and shared insights with planning and engineering students. Covington youth documented the stories with insightful photos. Together each university and high school student team created profiles of unique individuals in the community. A lifelong resident who loves to tell stories. A newcomer determined to beautify her surroundings. A clown who teaches leadership skills.

These are shown by the students to be the voices of Covington, and they are intended to portray a city filled with challenges and riches. With the narrative and photos the students created a narrative frame for larger, more comprehensive stories of a complex city that informs both the studio projects and the Covington community.

An open house and exhibit of the project were hosted in the gallery of the Covington Artisan’s Enterprise Center in March, 2012. For full profiles and photo credits visit http://www.uc.edu/cdc/niehoff_studio/programs/place_matters/w12/journalism.html

“When I went to get my degree in social work I thought, ‘Why would I want to leave a community that I love to go somewhere else?’ When you go and gain knowledge, you should apply that knowledge to your own neighborhood so you can make it a better place.”
– Faye Massey, story teller

“Covington is on the verge of greatness. A movement is stirring. Stay tuned.”
– Jerrod Theobald, new kid in town

“Everybody wants to fix Covington, but it’s almost like you have to go with its vibe. It’s got to evolve on its own.”
– Tim Dwight, time keeper

“I wouldn’t have stayed if there had not been a group of neighbors who also wanted to make a difference.”
– Tom Wherry, pragmatic visionary

“Covington is first and foremost home. But it is also like a relationship—you love it but have to keep working at it. Covington is always changing and growing, so I need to change and grow as well. But I can also influence the change and growth.”
– Laura Knight, community artist

“I think I am here still to make this a better place. I want to become successful so I can give back to my community. Believe it or not, I love Covington. It made me who I am now.”
– Tanner Watts, unlikely survivor

1. Faye Massey
2. Mayor Chuck Scheper
3. University of Cincinnati Advanced Magazine Writing students
4. Art by Covington’s Future student photographers
5. Jerrod Theobald
6. Tim Dwight
7. Tom Wherry
8. Laura Knight
In the fall semester of 2012, interdisciplinary students in Computer Engineering, Civil Engineering, Industrial Design, Biomedical Engineering and Communications completed a course offered at the Niehoff Urban Studio in collaboration with the UC Forward program. This seminar was designed to introduce students to the creative process of research and innovation as well as collaborative cross-disciplinary team work necessary to address specific and real-world urban problems. Three interdisciplinary teams of student partnered with community organizations, a non-profit, and UC student government to address three pressing issues in and around the university uptown campus. These included neighborhood littering and trash problems related to student’s annual “move out day”, severe parking problems that plague residential neighborhoods surrounding campus, and barriers to communication existing among students in and around campus. Student teams worked directly with external and internal stakeholders to document the full scope of identified issues. They researched best practice solutions found elsewhere and explored innovation proposals designed to ameliorate target problems. Solutions included more effective networking of existing resources, reframing expectations about internal student communications, and the practical applications of new technology. Collaborators included Keep Cincinnati Beautiful, Cincinnati Assistant City Manager, CUF and Corryville Community Councils, and UC Student Government.

Littering and Moving Day

**Challenge:**
Identify and analyze the upstream factors that lead to littering in the CUF neighborhood and design an infrastructure that will alleviate the littering phenomena and move out day chaos as well as instill ownership and pride in the appearance of the neighborhood, specifically in student housing areas.

**Proposals:**
Working with existing service providers, hold a re-use market at the end of the on-campus move-out, which will be open to the community. Proceeds will go to charitable entities that sign up to collect goods.

Increase the number of trash cans around campus using technologically advanced “BigBelly” trash cans that compact trash using solar energy thus enabling 15 times more trash to be collected.

**Moving Day**

To hold a design competition for the new trash cans in order to engage the community and raise awareness about the importance of proper waste disposal.

UC Communication on Campus

**Challenge:**
How do we increase the quantity as well as the quality of communication between University of Cincinnati’s Student Government and the respective student body?

**Proposals:**
Start a marketing campaign to make students aware of Student Government, through product marketing, personal communication booths, and humorous advertising to positively promote communication between Student Government and the student body on campus. Also proposed was an improvement to current forms of communication such as the Student Government website, student feedback via Blackboard, and tracking student communication.

Uptown Parking and Accessibility

**Challenge:**
Communities surrounding the UC campus suffer from parking accessibility issues for residents, students and visitors. How do we alleviate this problem and provide more efficient parking access at all destinations?

**Proposals:**
The students supported existing and new parking improvement efforts including long term campus remote parking, residential parking permits, public transit student passes, park and ride, zip cars and UC’s free bike share program. A key innovation proposal included smart technology employed in curb side kiosks with linked smart phone accessibility that would manage street parking availability for residents, notify other users about free spaces, and manage peak congestion periods with dynamic demand pricing.
Bike Ways & Bus Rapid Transit

The studio theme for 2012-14 is focused on mobility options in the Greater Cincinnati Metropolitan area. During the first year the studio is collaborating with local transit authorities and civic groups to examine Bus Rapid Transit and new Bike Trail opportunities. In the fall semester of 2012, engineering students began background research by collecting relevant standards and best practice examples. During the spring semester engineering students will collaborate with planning students to produce development scenarios and specific technical applications for six BRT corridors and three new bike trails.

Bike Paths and Trails

Safety and Road Share:
Safety is the basis of shared road design. Bicyclists are subject to the vehicular law of the road. Drivers lack awareness of bicyclists on the road and often fail to make appropriate allowances for them. There are many ways of managing shared bike lanes on roadways to help drivers and bicyclists stay safe.

Environmental Benefits:
Bicycle use is proven to be environmentally friendly through reduced travel emissions. But bike trail construction can also create important green infrastructure for stormwater management and carbon sequestration, as well as preserve or create natural areas especially when trails convert blighted abandoned rail lines.

Trail Conveniences, Service and Operation:
Important areas of consideration to take into account for creating sustainable bike trails include amenities such as rest rooms, water fountains, maintenance facilities, rest areas, and storage options.

Financing and Economic Impact:
Capitalization and financing models are important to understand in developing Bike trails. Right-of-Way and abandoned rail acquisition may be supported with municipal “rail-banking” efforts, private-public partnership, and critical federal and state funding. Studies support the positive economic impact of trail development on both residential property values and business activity around the trails.

Identity, Education, and Wayfinding

An attractive and distinct identity for the BRT will generate excitement, increase customer loyalty, and attract new users. Bike paths and trails can also benefit from creative “branding” and necessary wayfinding systems. For both movement options a communications strategy is necessary that might include pamphlets, media campaigns, and public meetings to disseminate information to the community.

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

Transit Signal Priority & Operations:
Enhanced flow for BRT routes is critical. Transit Signal Operations could be used at various traffic signals along the BRT routes and Queue Jumps could be employed to help advance buses in heavy traffic. It could also integrate real time passenger information with transit signal priority in to one Intelligent Transportation Control System.

Right–of–Way:
Types of Right-of-Way include dedicated bus-ways, hybrid use, and mixed use. Each ROW approach carries unique advantages and disadvantages in how it accommodates the BRT, regular bus service, Auto flow, street parking, property access, merchant operations, and other considerations.

Transit–Oriented Development (TOD):
TOD is a mixed-use area that is specifically designed to support public transit and maximize ridership. Areas that have been identified for BRT TOD development or associated bikeway development can be facilitated in a number of ways including zoning and parking allowances, and other incentives. TOD and Bikeway Associated Development are important economic development tools to promote density, housing choice, and economic benefits.

Vehicles, Rider issues, and Safety:
BRT buses are uniquely designed for maximum capacity, speed, and identity. Aspects of BRT systems that are important to users are route headway, handicap accessibility, fast loading and payment options, comfort, speed of service, real-time bus location, and safety of stations and vehicle.
Small Scale Urban Installations

In the fall semester of 2012, Industrial design and urban planning students completed Do-it-yourself (DIY) Urbanism projects for the center city of Covington. This studio was related to last year’s Niehoff Studio Covington Center City Action Plan as well as the theme of the DIY Urbanism public education event of Fall 2011 and DIY Competition project of Spring 2012. DIY Urbanism or Tactical Urbanism is an increasingly popular strategy for creating longer-term change through temporary projects. These can be anything from pop-up retail, to art installations, to events that, though temporary in nature, can change public perception or prove a different use model for underutilized urban spaces. A temporary urban project is a good middle ground for diverse disciplines to collaborate and to think slightly outside the normal realm for each discipline. DIY Urbanism projects were successfully held in downtown Covington throughout November 2012. Eight projects included creating sidewalk mini-parks, a storefront exhibit program, guerilla historical displays, decorating a rail underpass, and implementing a chalk art event in the Pike Street Arcade. Other projects are described below. Industrial Design instructor Matt Anthony led this effort.

Activating the Dark

Pop-up Park on Pike Street:
Covington is currently divided between Mainstrasse and Madison Avenue by a blighted rail underpass. The underpass on Pike Street was activated by students as a space and program designed to reconnect the city. An “Activating the Dark” event was held under the overpass on November 28th. Chairs and tables were designed and placed to invite people in. Roebling Point Books and Coffee and Lime Taqueria set up booths. People came to sit down, have coffee, and read a book. Once the sun set, the entire space transformed into an art installation, with a projection that lit up the structure, the floor, and a neighboring wall, activating them with the use of several light performances. Because of the portability and temporary aspects of this project, the possibilities for future events like this are endless. The furniture was donated to the biggest contributors to the project, Roebling Point Books & Coffee and Hub+Weber, this was done with the agreement that they will lend them out for future events. As a continuation of Activating the Dark, a simple manual has been provided so that anyone could submit a proposal for a neglected space that needs some reactivating.

Covington’s First Urban Golf Tournament

Covington’s first Urban Golf Tournament was created by students as a way of activating the many empty or underutilized parking lots in Covington. The tournament was intended to be a community development project as well, where local businesses either sponsored or made mini golf tracks and custom made, hand crafted, Covington related elements. It was a one-day pop-up event, on November 17th that took place on the top of the City Center Garage on East Seventh Street. There were also tricycles and sidewalk chalk for children, and a food truck. This event was free and supported by local sponsors and donations. The merchants of Covington are interested in taking the lead for next year’s tournament.

Walk Covington

A System of Way-finding Signage:
This project seeks to re-connect the separated areas in Covington through wayfinding that would guide people through the city. Covington has many relevant “hidden gems” both historically and culturally. A system of street signs could spark interest in these places, would bring awareness to visitors, and aid navigation in the city. “Walk Covington” is a temporary system of signage for linking attractions around downtown Covington, Ky. Three main areas were targeted to place the signage: the Mainstrasse area, the riverfront hotel / convention center area, and the Madison Corridor. The goal was to encourage those visiting or working in particular areas of Covington to perhaps explore and walk to a different area of town and discover something interesting or new along the way. To measure the effectiveness and the reach of the signage a Facebook group was created. To create awareness and encourage opinions we put QR codes and web addresses on every sign so smartphone users or Facebook users could access the page.
Energy, Mobility, and Urban Form

Twelve undergraduate architecture students led by Professor Rebecca Williamson participated in an affiliated class to the Niehoff Urban Studio in the Fall Semester 2012. This studio was focused on Energy, Mobility, and Urban Form. Students projected thirty year future scenarios for development and movement systems along Reading Road in Avondale. The studio theme was linked to the Metropolis and Mobility research project for a comparable study of form and movement among the cities of Curitiba - Brazil, Bordeaux - France, and Cincinnati. Working with members of the North Avendale Community Council, architecture students in this studio focused on urban form, land-use, and transporation on the Reading Road corridor between MLK and Norwood Lateral. The studio challenge was “how to ensure individuals the comforts and mobility they have come to expect in modern life, yet avoid the negative impacts of our current modes of occupation, transportation, and resource consumption.” In response, students explored a wide variety of approaches that related alternative movement infrastructure such as pedestrian, auto, bicycle, and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) options with greenspace network connections, dense mixed use development models, lifestyle concepts, and novel activity programming. Multi-modal hubs were a specific interest among students with the aim of bringing together Auto Parking, Bikeways, BRT lines, and future Light Rail systems at locations that could provide space for community functions such as recreation uses, civic commons, and neighborhood services. At these locations, situated at key intersections along the corridor stretching from MLK Boulevard at the south to Norwood Lateral at the north, many students exploited the opportunity for the development of a dense cluster of mixed uses around the hub in a configuration commonly known as “Transit Oriented Development” (TOD) that supported a dense mix of retail, office, and residential uses.
Technical Service

- Gabriel’s Place Community Urban Food Campus
- Economic and Community Impacts of the Revitalized Music Hall
- DIY Urbanism Competition in Cincinnati
- Model Group Baseline Impact Study
- Metropolis and Mobility Research Project
- GOOD Ideas for Cities
The Community Design Center continued this project initiated in 2010 to implement a comprehensive food campus for the Avondale Community. CDC partnered with the Cincinnati Community Action Agency, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), Place Matters - Do Right, Avondale Community Council and the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Ohio to plan and implement the campus. Located at the site of the former St Michaels and All Angels Church on Reading Road in Avondale, the program consists of food production, distribution and education activities. This effort received a "Best collaborative effort" award from the Community Development Corporations Association of Greater Cincinnati.

New facilities at the campus include an urban orchard, a community garden with green house and fish producing aquaponics, and a farmer’s market for produce from the site and a network of gardens throughout the neighborhood. The existing Church Sanctuary was opened for community events and the adjacent Parish house was completely renovated to house classroom space for culinary training, a commercial scale kitchen incubator, and administrative office space. The CDC collaborated with Landscape Architect Martin Koepke to develop a campus plan and then provided complete architectural design for the Parish House. This included design for a replacement building addition for the larger kitchen and culinary program. The expansion was designed to make the building fully accessible for persons with disabilities and, as requested, compatible with the historic character of the the existing parish house. All measures of green building materials and construction were incorporated, including water conserving fixtures, daylighting, ventilation, recycled/recyclable materials, high efficiency lighting and controls, and super-insulated construction.
Economic and Community impacts of the revitalized Music Hall

The Community Design Center collaborated with the University of Cincinnati Economics Center of the College of Business to analyze the impact of the revitalization and future operations of Cincinnati’s Music Hall. CDC studied the changing physical context of Over-The-Rhine and the position of Music Hall as an influential anchor within it.

The first part of this report, by the Economic Center projects the economic impact of renovation expenditures, anticipated operations of Music Hall in 2015, as well as the fiscal impacts generated from both. The operations impact is measured from the projected operating expenditures of the four resident companies—Cincinnati Ballet, Cincinnati Opera, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, and May Festival.

The second part of this report, done by the CDC, details the position of Music Hall as an influential anchor within its urban context. The location of Music Hall is shown in relation to other arts institutions and to the substantial investment in the area. Changing demographic and social indicators are illustrated and discussed relative to Music Hall. Connectivity is analyzed between Music Hall and the existing and proposed arts, entertainment, and cultural clusters within the area. And finally Music Hall is understood in relative terms to other arts organizations in attendance, revenue, and employment measures.
DIY Urbanism Competition in Cincinnati

As a follow-up to the DIY Urbanism Event of November 2011, the CDC, in partnership with the Architectural Foundation of Cincinnati, produced a public competition for local DIY Urbanism proposals. This competition explored themes behind the conception and implementation of grass roots urban projects that are collaborative and improvisational. DIY Urbanism promotes small scale projects that bring new life to the city and influence how we use and perceive our urban environment.

Thirteen projects were submitted for both student and non-student categories. The entries were judged and put on exhibit at the AFC galleries at 611 Race Street on June 1. Judges included Tamara Harkavy - Artwork, Elissa Yancey - SoapBox, Jonathan Sears - ParProject, and Noah Bergman - DAAP. Prizes were given for three categories: Student: Tower Place Parking Garage storefront murals, Gael Pericho; Non-Student: High Light OTR: An Interactive Wayfinding Beacon by Connective Conscience, Eric Lindsay, Sylvester Yeo; People’s choice: Tucker’s Restaurant Parklet, Michelle Anderson, Mike Uhlenhake, Becky Schneider.

Non-Student Winner: High Light OTR

When Pigs Fly

Student Winner: Tower Place Parking Garage storefront murals

Goetz Alley Update

reClaim the Streets

People’s Choice Winner: Tucker’s Parklet

Judging Competition at the AFC Gallery
Model Group Baseline Impact Study

This survey project, begun in the summer of 2011, was conducted in partnership with the University of Cincinnati Economics Center. This work was requested by the Model Group, an affordable housing provider that is undertaking a number of rehabilitation and construction projects of selected structures in various parts of Cincinnati’s Over-the-Rhine and Pendleton neighborhoods. Some of the rehabilitations involve the relocation of U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Housing Assistance Payments contracts to both new buildings and consolidating scattered subsidized housing units in the same buildings. The purpose of this study was to gain a baseline understanding and metrics for measurement of neighborhood conditions in the areas surrounding these proposed developments. These baseline condition measurements are intended to be compared to future data on the same study area to create a time-series of neighborhood conditions to gauge the impact of housing investment.

The CDC and the Economics Center worked together to develop a suite of analyses that could provide a more complete and accurate depiction of the study areas. These analyses triangulated by including quantitative and qualitative techniques, statistical analysis, spatial analysis, visual surveys in the field, and a telephone survey.

The CDC survey included an inventory in four areas of expected impact. A physical analysis of each area measured existing property conditions and streetscape blight. This included an assessment of investment as visible through the preservation of historic properties and investment/disinvestment indicated through building permits and code violations. A social analysis measured demographic indicators and crime incidents, as well as an analysis of street activity and social effects of the built environment. Finally a telephone survey conducted by the Economics Center correlated resident perceptions against existing observed physical conditions and other social activity measures.
The Niehoff Studio was invited to participate in an international research project with Universities from Bordeaux, France and Curitiba, Brazil to compare the different mobility issues present in these two cities with Greater Cincinnati. Funded by the French Ministry of Culture and in part by the UC Forward Initiative, the project involves faculty from five disciplines among these universities, including Economics, Urban Planning, and Architecture from UC programs. The research will document comparable measures of public policy, user experience, and urban form relevant to all modes of transportation in each of the partner cities. In addition to faculty research, teaching activities within the various participating UC schools and the Niehoff Studio support the project through student studio design work and seminar research.

Specific Niehoff Studio research is concentrated on documenting Greater Cincinnati conditions including all past, present, and proposed transportation networks, including water, roadway, rail, and bikeway infrastructure. Providing documentation and visualization of the relationship between movement systems, demographic conditions and trends, and land-use, with natural and built form configurations is the focus of Studio work. Findings within the Greater Cincinnati Metropolitan Area are expected to clarify relationships among these elements and uncover opportunities for higher efficiencies for movement systems. Comparative research among the participating cities is intended to contribute to the body of knowledge about metropolitan mobility issues.
Good Ideas

Good Ideas for Cities

During the Fall of 2011 the Niehoff Urban Studio responded to a call for participants in a national event program produced by GOOD magazine and ArtPlace. This program, targeted at mid-sized cities, is called GOOD Ideas for Cities and promotes creative problem solving among civic leaders and design innovators. The Niehoff Urban Studio collaborated with the Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile, Jr./U.S. Bank Foundation, Soapbox, AIGA Cincinnati, and AIA Cincinnati to fund and coordinate the effort which resulted in a culminating event at the Contemporary Arts Center on May 16th, 2012. The event, attended by 350, was scheduled to integrate with the Spring national CEOs for Cities Conference occurring at that time.

Six local creative teams made up of architects, designers, and creative professionals were culled from an applicant pool of 27 to work on the following civic partners and their challenges:

Cincinnati Contemporary Arts Center: How can the local arts scene serve as a catalyst for the local creative economy in a way that will attract talent, fuel innovation and build a stronger workforce?

Metro, TANK, Agenda 360, and Vision 2015: How can we create a more user-focused transit experience around a bus rapid transit line that builds brand equity and consumer commitments with a unified, region-wide voice, creating rising public demand for a better regional system?

Strive Partnership and Knowledgeworks: Knowing that early education is especially critical to our students’ lifelong development, how can we design, implement, and evaluate a system of parental involvement within early education for Cincinnati families?

Haile/US Bank Foundation, LISC and the Cincinnati Area Board of Realtors: How can we help our communities come together and make changes necessary to increase their local walkability?

Green Umbrella, Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance, Cincinnati Office of Environmental Quality: With the goals of saving money, reducing emissions and putting local residents to work, how do we get more Cincinnati households to perform energy efficiency upgrades on their home?

Closing the Health Gap and the Greater Cincinnati Foundation: How can we increase both availability of healthy foods and education about healthy eating in underserved neighborhoods?

Design Strategies to support healthy food access and eliminate Food Deserts by Team Design Cincy

Promoting urban walkability through youth gaming by Team Scout Camp

Home Energy Fitness media campaign by Team Hyperquake

An App to support Bus ridership by Team Possible Worldwide

A promotional arts network by Team 20 Somethings Doing Something

Advocacy and mentoring program to promote parental involvement with youth academic success by Team Cincinnatives
Events

AIA Cincinnati Chapter Meeting: Media  January 19th, 2012
Studio Open House  March 12th, 2012
DAAP Cares  April 12th, 2012
Niehoff Urban Studio Fundraiser  May 6th, 2012
Local Dollars, Local Sense  May 8th, 2012
Good Ideas  May 17th, 2012
DIY Urbanism Competition  June 1st, 2012
Studio Open House  June 6th, 2012
Metropolis and Mobility Workshop  September 9-14th, 2012
AIA Cincinnati Urban Design Committee  October 1st, 2012
Communication in the Urban Environment  October 3-4th, 2012
Public Interest Design Institute  October 9-10th, 2012
AIA Cincinnati Chapter Meeting: Education  October 16th, 2012
Food Trucks  October 29th, 2012
Studio Open House  December 7th, 2012
March 3rd, 2012

Studio Open House

Winter 2012 quarter studio work culminated in juried presentations and an open house exhibiting student work on the Covington Center City Action Plan. Covington City Staff from the Department of Community Development, professional consultants, and UC faculty attended multi-disciplinary student team presentations. Student work was also exhibited at a public open house at Covington’s Kentucky Artisan’s Enterprise Center.

April 12th, 2012

DAAP Cares

The Niehoff Studio hosted the DAAP Cares event in its space on Tuesday, April 12th, 2012. The goal of DAAP Cares is to display and recognize DAAP as a resource for research, innovation and development for humanitarian work in terms of design, architecture, art, and planning locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. The exhibition consisted of 20 projects including the Community Design Center Gabriel’s Place Food Campus Project which was presented by coordinator and community partner Leslie Stevenson.

May 6th, 2012

Niehoff Urban Studio Fundraiser

Studio Patron Buck Niehoff was the recipient of the “Flying Urbanist” award at the Studio’s first annual fundraising event. This award presented by DAAP Dean Robert Probst, recognizes Buck’s unique vision and steadfast support for the Studio and its continued mission. Eighty guests representing interests in business, arts, design, and civic leadership viewed Studio work and enjoyed entertainment provided by students of UC’s Conservatory of Music. The event raised nearly $20,000 for graduate student support.

January 19th, 2012

AIA Cincinnati Chapter Meeting: Media

Editor-in-Chief, Ned Cramer of Architecture Magazine visited the studio as a part of the November monthly meeting of the AIA Cincinnati. He spoke on “Occupy Architecture” and how the current Occupy movement while primarily focused on economic and social inequities, it has also contributed a spontaneous architecture to some of our most public of places.

May 6th, 2012

Niehoff Urban Studio Fundraiser
Local Dollars, Local Sense

The Niehoff Urban Studio hosted a discussion with Michael Shuman – author, economist, attorney and entrepreneur, that included a presentation on his new book, Local Dollars, Local Sense: How to Shift Your Money from Wall Street to Main Street and Achieve Real Prosperity. His presentation showcased investment tools needed to begin moving the millions invested in Wall Street back to your home street. The tools discussed included: cutting-edge cooperatives, special local-business CDs, pre-selling, slow munis, public banks, revolving loan funds, local investment clubs, and self-directed IRAs. Shuman emphasized new job creation through local small business development, known to contribute, on average, half of a typical community’s economy.

May 8th, 2012

Good Ideas

On May 16, 350 civic minded participants attended the Cincinnati GOOD Ideas for Cities event at the Cincinnati Contemporary Arts Center. Produced by GOOD Magazine in partnership with the Niehoff Urban Studio and the Haile/US Bank Foundation, the event was the outcome of a six month planning process and a six week design process in which six creative teams worked with collaborating civic groups to vision solutions to a number of urban challenges including food access, educational attainment, transit mobility, energy conservation, neighborhood walkability, and arts incubation.

May 17th, 2012

DIY Urbanism Competition

An exhibit and recognition event was hosted for a DIY Urbanism project competition at the AFC Gallery, 811 Race Street. The competition was produced jointly by the Niehoff Urban Studio and the Architectural Foundation of Cincinnati. 20 submissions for a wide variety of micro projects were intended to bring new life to the city and influence how we use and perceive our urban environment. Prizes were awarded in three categories corresponding with student, non-student, and people’s choice categories.

June 1st, 2012

Studio Open House

The Spring Quater 2012 Review of Student work and Open House exhibit marked the end of the year long partnership project with the City of Covington on its Center City Action Plan. Engineering capstone student teams presented detailed technical design solutions for aspects of urban design projects developed through the beginning of the year. Covington City staff reviewed project designs for issues including pedestrian bridges, green infrastructure, roadway design, parking facilities, and parkland.

June 6th, 2012

Metropolis and Mobility Workshop

The Niehoff Urban Studio was the site for a week-long workshop for collaborating researchers from UC and Universities in Curitiba, Brazil and Bordeaux, France. This workshop was the second of three meetings of these researchers to discuss progress in developing comparative measures among the three cities concerning policies, experience and urban form related to movement in the cities. The research team hosted presentations by OKI, Metro/SORTA, and the Alliance for Regional Transit.

September 9-14th, 2012
October 3rd-4th, 2012

Communication in the Urban Environment

A roundtable on “Communication in the Environment” was held at the Niehoff Studio in October. The meeting focused on establishing a shared vision for how the College of DAAP could become a leader in this area since becoming the recipient of the Terry Fruth/Gemini Chair of Signage Design and Community Planning. Led by facilitator Leslie Dilworth, seventeen Industry experts, designers, and consultants met for the daylong planning session.

October 9-10th, 2012

Public Interest Design Institute

The Niehoff Urban Studio was the site of a two day Public Interest Design Institute in October. This workshop, organized Design Corps and other partners provide inspiration and practical instruction on how designers can promote socially, economically, and environmentally healthy communities. Led by Bryan Bell and five other panelists including Maurice Cox, Ramsey Ford, Dan Pitera, Emilie Taylor, and Michael Zaretsky the Institute presented successful case studies to more than thirty students and practitioners.

October 16th, 2012

AIA Cincinnati Chapter Meeting: Education

The Niehoff Urban studio hosted a monthly chapter meeting for AIA Cincinnati. This meeting was organized to discuss the state of education for the next generation of architects. A panel consisting of UC College of DAAP School of Architecture and Interior Design Director William Williams, Practicing Architect Chad Edwards of Emerson Design, and SAID student Connor Brindaz contributed to a discussion led by AIA President Chris Patek.

October 29th, 2012

Food Trucks

A dozen food truck vendors convened at the Niehoff Studio in October to hear student presentations on progressive policy for vending in Cincinnati. These Planning Capstone Students, led by Professor Marissa Zapata, were researching best practices found across the country for mobile food vending programs for applicability in Cincinnati. Cincinnati has enjoyed a profusion of mobile vending offerings, now numbering 20 since first being introduced in 2010.

December 7th, 2012

Studio Open House

Students of the four courses that took place in the Fall semester of 2012 presented work under the following themes, Tactical Urbanism, Inquiry to Innovation, Integrated Design, and Observing the City. Students in Industrial Design, Urban Planning, Engineering, Fashion Design, Interior Design, Criminal Justice and Communications participated in this semester’s studios. The open house event attendees included students, faculty from UC, architecture and planning professionals, and community stakeholders.
Credits

Collaborating Faculty and Researchers
- Stephen Samuels, Planner and Facilitator (Music Hall Study)
- Jeff Rexhausen, Economist (Model Group)
- Dr. Carla Chifos, Planner (Metropolis and Mobility)
- Dr. Rebecca Williamson, Architect (Metropolis and Mobility)
- Dr. Olivier Parent, Economist (Metropolis and Mobility)
- Dr. Gigi Escoe, Economist/Associate Provost (UC Forward - I2I)

Teaching Faculty
- Matt Anthony, Adjunct Instructor, Industrial Design (studio Fall 2012)
- Terry Grundy, Resident Urbanist, Adj. Assoc. Professor, Urban Planning
- Elissa Yancey, Assistant Professor, Journalism (associated seminar Winter 2012)
- Rebecca Williamson, Professor, Architecture (associated seminar Fall 2012)

Graduate Assistants, Coops and Student Helpers

Community

City of Covington
- Haile/US Bank Foundation
- Progressive Urban Management Associates
- Northern Kentucky Vision 2015
- Covington Center for Great Neighborhoods
- City of Cincinnati Office of the Asst. City Manager
- Keep Cincinnati Beautiful
- University of Cincinnati Student Senate
- Corryville Community Council

LISC of Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky
- Kinselman Kline Gossman Urban Design
- Agenda 360
- Metro SORTA
- Mill Creek Restoration Project
- Northside Community Council
- Green Umbrella
- Cincinnati American Institute of Architects
- Wasson Way Bike Trail Advocacy group

Episcopal Diocese of Southwest Ohio
- Cincinnati-Hamilton Co Community Action Agency
- Western Riverfront Bike Trail Advocacy group
- Architectural Foundation of Cincinnati
- Music Hall Revitalization Corporation
- Contemporary Arts Center
- Place Matters - Do Right
- Avondale Community Council
- Strive Partnership

Architectural Foundation of Cincinnati
- The Model Group
- University of Bordeaux
- University of Curitiba
- GOOD Magazine
- CUF Community Council
- The Awesome Collective of Covington
- Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance
- Closing the Health Gap
# Planners

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# Designers

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<td>Eliot Raderman</td>
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**Fashion:**

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<td>Michelle Newland</td>
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### Aerospace:

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<tr>
<td>Billy Schlich</td>
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### Civil:

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<td>Andres Lopez-Montoya</td>
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# Journalists

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<td>Blake Hammond</td>
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### Criminal Justice:

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### Communications:

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<tr>
<td>Joseph Deye</td>
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### Other

#### News Coverage of recent Core Change event highlights Gabriel’s Place, one of the Design Center’s recent collaborative projects | Axiom News

#### Challenge Accepted: Good Ideas for Cities visits Cincinnati to discuss local urban issues | City Beat

#### Bridging Broadway – Niehoff Studio Casino Project | Soapbox Cincinnati

#### Madisonville Shapes the Future with Quality-of-Life Plan | Place Matters

## Press

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>2.1.2012</td>
<td>Director Frank Russell quoted on public library’s role in community life</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.3.2012</td>
<td>East Third Dayton, Ohio Urban Design Charrette</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.10.2012</td>
<td>CDC director Frank Russell quoted in article about revitalization in Walnut Hills</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.21.2012</td>
<td>Niehoff Studio to host the Cincinnati Stop of the GOOD Ideas for Cities Tour</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.22.2012</td>
<td>News Coverage of recent Core Change event highlights Gabriel’s Place, one of the Design Center’s recent collaborative projects</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.22.2012</td>
<td>Gabriel’s Place: Growing Vegetables, Nourishing Souls</td>
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<td>5.22.2012</td>
<td>Challenge Accepted: Good Ideas for Cities visits Cincinnati to discuss local urban issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.12.2012</td>
<td>St. Anthony Village ten years later – A CDC Project Matures</td>
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<td>7.24.2012</td>
<td>GOOD Ideas: New Landscapes for Local Food Deserts</td>
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<td>11.10.2012</td>
<td>Madisonville Shapes the Future with Quality-of-Life Plan</td>
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## Steering Committee

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<tr>
<td>Santa Ono</td>
<td>Senior Vice President and Provost</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gisela Escoe</td>
<td>Vice Provost Undergraduate Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Richard Harknett</td>
<td>University of Cincinnati Faculty Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>MaryBeth McGrew</td>
<td>Assoc. Vice President Campus Design and Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Probst</td>
<td>Dean, College of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>H.C. Buck Niehoff</td>
<td>Trustee University of Cincinnati Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>David Syzmanski</td>
<td>Dean, College of Business</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steve Wilson</td>
<td>Interim President, University of Cincinnati Foundation</td>
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</table>
This academic outreach partnership is sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. H.C. Buck Niehoff, the Harriet R. Williams Downey Fund, the Tilda Fund, the Fabe Family Fund, and the University of Cincinnati and is administered by the Community Design Center of the College of Design, Art, Architecture and Planning.