CAPPA

FORUM

Research + Creative Works Symposium

DESIGNING THE FUTURE METROPOLIS

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

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CAPPA

FORUM

Research + Creative Works Symposium

Designing the Future Metropolis

Community-Centered, Intelligent, and Resilient
Solutions for a Thriving North Texas

MARCH 3, 2026

UTA College of Architecture, Planning and Public Affairs

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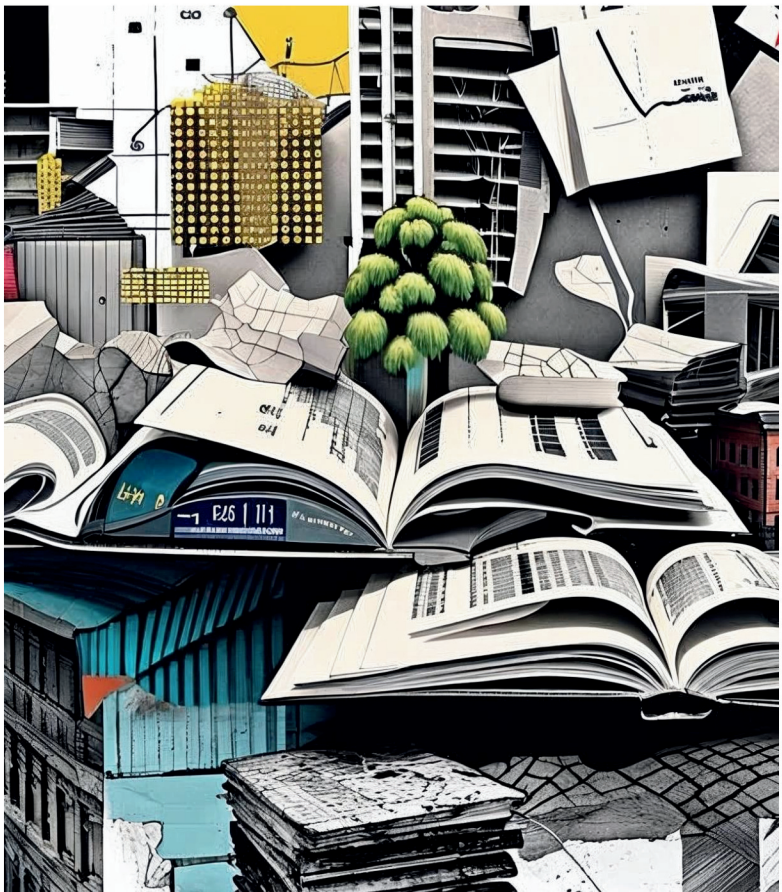


Welcome!

Ming-Han Li, Ph.D, AICP, PE, PLA
Dean

Welcome to the inaugural **CAPPA Forum: Research and Creative Works Symposium**. This symposium highlights the depth and impact of the work produced by our faculty and students and reflects CAPPA's commitment to advancing ideas that shape our communities.

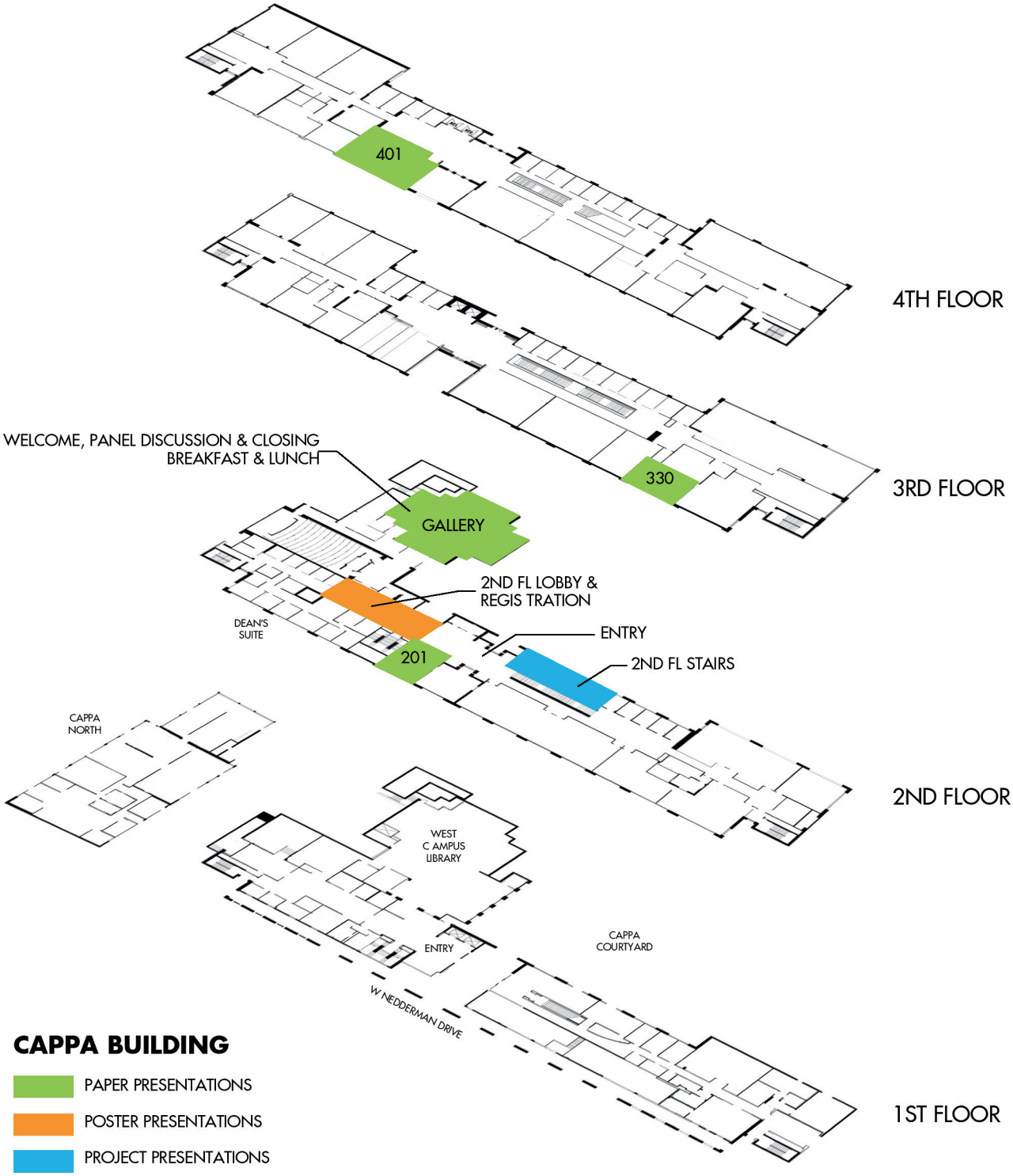
Across the college, inquiry and creativity drive our mission. Bringing this work together strengthens our culture of innovation and fosters new conversations and connections.

Thank you for joining us. I look forward to the insights and collaborations that will emerge today.

Karabi Bezboruah, Ph. D
Associate Dean

It is a pleasure to gather together in celebration of the rigor, creativity, and impact that define CAPPA's faculty and student work. This symposium provides an opportunity to share scholarship, explore creative inquiry, and spark new collaborations.

By coming together across disciplines and perspectives, we advance knowledge, deepen our connections, and reaffirm CAPPA's commitment to excellence, innovation, and meaningful engagement with the communities we serve—now and into the future.



UTA
College of Architecture,
Planning and Public Affairs

Symposium Schedule

Breakfast & Welcome		Room
8:30 - 9:15	Registration	2nd Floor Hall
8:30 - 9:30	Breakfast	Architecture Gallery
9:15 - 9:45	Welcome by UTA Provost Tamara Brown + CAPPA Dean Ming-Han Li	Architecture Gallery
Morning Sessions (concurrent)		
10 - 12:00	Paper Presentations	Architecture Gallery (206) Rooms 201, 401, 330
10 - 12:00	Studio Project Presentations	2nd Floor Stairs
10 - 12:00	Poster Presentations	2nd Floor Hall
Lunch – 12:00 - 1:00 PM		Architecture Gallery
Panel Discussion – 1:00 - 2:00 PM		Architecture Gallery
Afternoon Sessions (concurrent)		
2:15 - 4:15	Paper Presentations	Architecture Gallery and Room 201
2:15 - 4:15	Studio Project Presentations	2nd Floor Stairs
2:15 - 4:15	Poster Presentations	2nd Floor Hallway
Reception & Awards		Architecture Gallery
4:30	Reception	Architecture Gallery
5:00 - 6:00	Awards Ceremony & Closing Remarks	Architecture Gallery

CAPPA FORUM 2026

Expert Panelists

Today's panel, *Designing the Future Metropolis*, brings together **Blaine Brownell**, **Elaine Kearney**, and **Dr. Wayne Atchley** to explore how interdisciplinary approaches shape metropolitan futures. Guided by moderator **Dean Ming-Han Li**, the panelists will share brief perspectives followed by a moderated discussion and audience Q&A.

Prof. Blaine Brownell, FAIA

Director, School of Architecture
UNC Charlotte

Blaine Brownell is an architect, educator, and researcher focused on emergent and sustainable materials. A former Fulbright scholar to Japan, he has authored nine books and writes the long-running "Mind & Matter" column for Architect magazine. His work appears widely, and his latest book, The Pandemic Effect, examines resilient built environments.

Elaine Kearney, FASLA

Managing Principal
TBG Partners

Elaine Kearney, FASLA, is Managing Principal of TBG Partners' San Antonio office, leading work rooted in the Edwards Plateau eco-region. Passionate about shaping Texas' evolving built environment, she is President-Elect of the Landscape Architecture Foundation, Vice President of the San Antonio Botanical Garden, and a 2022 Texas ASLA Service Award recipient.

Dr. Wayne Atchley

Vice President of Regional Campuses, UTA

Dr. Wayne Atchley is the inaugural vice president for regional campuses at the University of Texas at Arlington. A Tarrant County native, he brings over 20 years of higher education leadership, previously serving at Tarrant County College and Tarleton State University. He is committed to expanding academic and workforce opportunities in West Fort Worth.

Paper Presentation Schedule

Built Environment - Designing Resilient Spaces
CAPPA 401 - 10:00 AM - Noon

Amy Trick	Architecture	Beat the Heat: Cooling Strategies for Dallas' Oak Cliff Neighborhood
Danielle Danson	Architecture	An Integrated Architectural System Retrofit Assessment: A Case Study in North Texas
David Hopman	Landscape Architecture	Creative Regionalism: Renewing the Aesthetic Experience of Landscape in Environmental Design and Planning
L. Macias Barrientos **Jiwon Suh**	Public Affairs & Planning	Tejando Comunidad: Informal Health Solutions Among the North Texas Latine Immigrant population

Applied Theory: Practical Pathways for Passive Design & Progressive Policy
CAPPA 330 - 10:00 AM - Noon

M. Maldonado-Griego	Architecture	Operationalizing Ecological Intelligence: A Diffusion Model Framework for Passive Design in Architecture
David Franco	Architecture	From Utopia to Equality: The Politics of Emancipation in Modern Social Housing
Nazmun Akter Pia **Karabi Bezboruah**	Public Affairs & Planning	Bridging Sectors, Engaging Communities: Collaborative Climate Adaptation in Coastal Bend, Texas
Jala Morrow	Public Affairs & Planning	The Evolving Public Servant

Paper Presentation Schedule

Innovations for Sustainable and Inclusive Housing
CAPPA 201 - 10:00 AM - Noon

Charles MacBride	Architecture	New Passive House Projects (finally) in North Texas
D. Chiessa, L. Morales, A. Uribe, A. Chastain	Architecture	Community-Based Urban Design Guidelines for Fort Worth's Historic Northside
Jenifer Reiner	Public Affairs & Planning	Manufactured Home Attainability in Tarrant and Dallas Counties
S. Nazarian, N. Ashrafi G. Lunawat	Public Affairs & Planning	Additive Manufacturing for Roof Structures: Improving Geometric Accuracy, Design Flexibility, and Strength

Livable Environment: Innovations for Health and Habitat
CAPPA Gallery - 10:00 AM - Noon

Shermeen Yousif	Architecture	Speculative Ecologies: AI-Enabled Design Futures for North Texas Cities
S. Sandip Khamitkar A. Makhmalbaf	Architecture	Evolving Passive Cooling Strategies: From Vernacular Desert Architecture to Intelligent Sustainable Design for Urban Resilience
Vanessa Delgado	Public Affairs & Planning	Planning for Maternal Health Equity: A Literature Review
Wei Zhai	Public Affairs & Planning	AI-based Home Sensing for Community Resilience in Texas

Paper Presentation Schedule

Community Design & Development
CAPPA 201 - 2:15 PM - 4:15 PM

Deden Rukmana **Samyuktha Sarvanan**	Public Affairs & Planning	From Campus to Community: Planning Strategies to Retain UT Arlington Graduates in the City of Arlington
D. Chiessa, J. Lindgren **G. Leevy, J. Horstman**	Architecture	76104 Visioning a Healthy City: Neighborhood Interventions for a Longer Life Expectancy
Lorena Toffer	Architecture	Design Capital in the Borderlands: How First-generation Latinas Reimagine the Future Metropolis
Nubras Samayeen	Architecture	DDRA= {DE}nsify + {DE}Pave + {RE}Think Arlington

Transportation: Connecting Communities Through Mobility and Access
CAPPA Gallery - 2:15 PM - 4:15 PM

A. Reyes Sanchez **Julene Paul** **Josh Newton**	Public Affairs & Planning	Transport Poverty and Employment Outcomes in a Dallas Unincorporated Community
Ayushi Mavuduru	Architecture	Bus Transit-Oriented Design for a More Equitable Trinity Metro System in Fort Worth, Texas
Mahdis Hamisi **Jianling Li** **Qisheng Pan**	Public Affairs & Planning	Healthcare Accessibility for Medicare and Medicaid Populations in the Dallas-Fort Worth Area

Studio Project Schedule

Morning Session
CAPPA Second Floor Stairs - 10:00 AM - Noon

Lorena Toffer	Architecture	La Esperanza Community Center: Transforming a vacant school into a community hub through design, diversity, and collaboration
Mateo Guio **Keilah Elliot** **Kevin Nguyen**	Architecture	Bay Court
Jackie Vuong **Reagan Smith** **Randall Alejandro**	Architecture	Resilient Archipelago: Upcycling Dredge Material to Co-create Habitable Islands
Tongbin Qu **Kacy Gray** **Amanda Maloch**	Landscape Architecture	Designing the Future Metropolis: Community-Centered, Intelligent, and Resilient Mobility Solutions in Downtown Arlington
Tobias Maiden **J. Garcia-Hernandez**	Architecture	Linking Park: A Floating Community Resilience Hub
Frances Walker **Eylul Cetinkanat**	Architecture	Delta Pier: A Looping Urban Landscape Above the Bay

Studio Project Schedule

Afternoon Session

CAPPA Second Floor Stairs - 2:15 PM - 4:15 PM

Belen Butragueno Diaz-Guerra	Architecture	Rethinking Tomorrow's Metropolis Through the Lens of Utopian Experiments
M. Maldonado-Griego Steven Flores	Architecture	The Living Tree - "Rooted in history, growing toward resilience."
Eylul Cetinkanat Frances Walker	Architecture	Wave Port - A Multimodal Transportation Hub Enhancing Coastal Resilience
Hortence Keita	Architecture	Island Park: A Resilient Community Concept
J. Garcia-Hernandez Tobias Maiden	Architecture	Float Link: An Emergency Terminal to Enhance Coastal Resilience
Max Dunne Ryan Elliot Hortence Keita	Architecture	Storm Pods

Poster Presentation Schedule

Morning Session
CAPPA Second Floor Hallway - 10:00 AM - Noon

Aisha Owusu	Public Affairs & Planning	Community-Led Environmental Justice and Reparative Planning in Sandbranch, Texas
E. Mistur, J. Paul, A. Bhattacharjee, & A. Grant	Public Affairs & Planning	Fracking and Environmental Injustice: Assessing Exposure to Pollutants among Texas Schoolchildren
A. Makhmalbaf & K. Khodahemmati	Architecture	Characterization of Parameters Affecting Personal Thermal Comfort Models used in Occupant-Centric Building Controls
S. Saravanan & Deden Rukmana	Architecture, Public Affairs & Planning	Transit-Oriented Development in Arlington Utilizing Geospatial Data and Grasshopper
Farruh Farhodov & Dyan Monzon	Architecture	Safe Station: A Resilient Mobility Hub for Emergency Response
Grant Leevy & Julia Lindgren	Architecture	Fabricated Flexibility: Digital Tools and the Future of Small-Scale Living in DFW
Jordon Drumgoole	Landscape Architecture	Redevelopment as Restoration: Integrating Policy, Design, and Culture in North Texas Communities
Kayli Nauls	Landscape Architecture	Uninvited Guests: Identifying and Replacing Invasive Plants at UTA

Poster Presentation Schedule

Afternoon Session

CAPPA Second Floor Hallway - 2:15 PM - 4:15 PM

Noah Hendrix	Public Affairs & Planning	Punctuated Equilibrium Theory: The Case of Public Health Regulations and Implications for Metropolitan Resilience
Marylin D Rozario & Karabi Bezboruah	Public Affairs & Planning	Bridging Capacity and Need: Organizational Inequities and Food Insecurity Across Texas Food Banks
O. Jenewein, K. Awour, S. Jarbouh, K. Bezboruah, M. Hummel	Architecture	Co-creating a Smart Coast: Bridging Human & Artificial Intelligence in Architecture and Urbanism
Selvana Getsy Lnu	Landscape Architecture	Small-Scale Green Infrastructure in Urban Networks - Trinity Presbyterian Church as a Pilot Project
S. Pellerin, S. Nazarian, N. Ashrafi, B. Bell	Architecture	Robotic Fabrication and Housing Resilience: Craft, Concrete, and the Future of Semi-Urban Living
Ayushi Mavuduru	Architecture	Typologies of Transition: Assessing three residential housing typologies in service of former foster youth in the DFW metroplex
Nazmun Akter Pia	Public Affairs & Planning	The Influence of Neighborhood Quality on Children's Health and Well-Being

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CAPPA FORUM 2026

Paper Abstracts

Beat The Heat

Cooling Strategies for Dallas' Oak Cliff Neighborhood

Amy Trick, Architecture

Oak Cliff, a neighborhood on the west side of the city of Dallas, Texas, shows high concentrations of hot zones per the Heat Watch Dallas data. It is also a diverse neighborhood that, except for select gentrified pockets, has many areas with over 20 percent of the population living below the poverty line. Within this study, this neighborhood was first considered through mapping to understand in which zones it is hardest for residents to access cooling resources.

The comparative analysis of tectonic and spatial qualities of these zones will be built upon to propose how small changes or upfits to existing typical elements of the built environment can facilitate better health and comfort by allowing respite from the heat.

An Integrated Architectural System Retrofit Assessment

A Case Study in North Texas

Danielle Danso, Architecture

This study aims to propose an integrated architectural system retrofit approach, which has capability to improve daylight and energy efficiency simultaneously. To achieve that, this study uses the Engineering Research Building (ERB) at University of Texas at Arlington as a case study to quantify the benefits of the proposed design. Arlington, TX is located in ASHRAE Climate Zone #3A. This zone is characterized by warm-humid conditions requiring higher needs for cooling and some energy demand during heating degree days. This study has been led by two main research questions: (1) What are the interdisciplinary subjects that correspond to adaptive façade concepts for creating an innovative architectural form? (2) What is the most effective factor in adaptive façade to enhance daylight and energy use simultaneously? To answer these questions, different types of façade systems in terms of their morphology and technologies were explored and classified. These categories include adaptive, glazing, green systems, and kinetic facades.

Creative Regionalism:

Renewing the Aesthetic Experience of Landscape in Environmental Design and Planning

David Hopman
Landscape Architecture

In this presentation, David Hopman will outline insights from his new book Creative Regionalism: Renewing the Aesthetic Experience of Landscape in Environmental Design and Planning, with a foreword by Frederick R. Steiner. The book is a monograph about a regionalism that is creative, cosmopolitan, and critical, with 104,000 words and 158 color figures. The book is in print as the first monograph that applies critical regionalism to the aesthetics and priorities of landscape architects.

Tejando Comunidad:

Informal health solutions among the North Texas Latine immigrant population.

Luis E. Macias Barrientos &
Jiwon Suh
Public Affairs & Planning

This study informs effective planning approaches by centering the health-seeking behaviors of Latine immigrant populations. Despite limited access to healthcare, Latine immigrants exhibit higher life expectancy, lower death rates, and lower infant mortality rates than natural-born residents in a phenomenon called the Hispanic Health Paradox (HHP). Centering immigrant populations is necessary to comprehend the proliferation of paradoxical health outcomes. So, what solutions do Latine immigrants engage in to receive healthcare in the United States?

Operationalizing Ecological Intelligence:

A Diffusion Model Framework for Passive Design in Architecture

Monica Maldonado-Griego, Architecture

This research investigates the extent to which diffusion models can move beyond visual representation to engage with the underlying logic of passive environmental design. It examines how artificial intelligence can be operationalized not merely as a tool for image generation, but as a collaborator capable of internalizing, encoding, and articulating resilient architectural principles rooted in ecological performance. Positioned within the broader discourse of intelligent cities and human-centered design, the work proposes a new methodological framework for integrating data-driven intelligence into the architectural design process.

From Utopia to Equality:

The Politics of Emancipation in Modern Social Housing

David Franco, Architecture

This paper reexamines twentieth-century modern social housing in non-western environments, as an emancipatory project, drawing on Rancière, Fraser and Honneth, and analyzing cases from 1920s to 1980s. It shows how, in opposition to dominant views in the West, modern architecture in non-western environments, reshaped visibility, dignity, and equality for the working-class, emerging as a cultural and political operation that offers lessons for contemporary debates on housing affordability.

Bridging Sectors, Engaging Communities:

Collaborative Climate Adaptation in Coastal Bend, Texas

Nazmun Akter Pia & Karabi Bezboruah
Public Affairs & Planning

This study examines how regional collaboration in the Coastal Bend region of Texas facilitates public participation and shapes climate adaptation planning. It is guided by the central question: How do collaborative networks involving cross-sector participants such as nonprofits, local governments, and industry actors promote or inhibit public engagement in climate adaptation efforts? As the region faces intensifying climate risks and rapid industrial expansion, the urgency of networked and inclusive environmental governance has never been greater. Nonprofit organizations can play an especially important role in this landscape, often acting as bridges between sectors to help align government and industry actions with community needs and priorities.

The Evolving Public Servant

Jala Morrow
Public Affairs & Planning

This developing study explores how various generations perceive and approach federal government careers by examining perceptions via focus groups and interviews, identifying trends from existing data, and evaluating strategies for recruiting and retaining dedicated talent discussed in current literature. Further, the study seeks to understand why younger talent may or may not be interested in public service at the federal level. This research aims to offer practical strategies for recruiting and retaining dedicated talent, ultimately building a more representative and engaged federal workforce.

New Passive House Projects (finally) in North Texas

Charles MacBride, Architecture

This paper and presentation will examine four current passive house projects that I have been designing here in North Texas and SW Oklahoma. The work represents a mix of applied professional and creative activity, and is a continuation of research into the cultural, political, and industry attitudes of sustainable building. The four projects include three single-family houses and a multi-family project.

All of the four projects have specified some type of prefabricated system, but practical and financial issues have put the uses of these into question. The presentation will be framed by a discussion of the architectural decisions based on site, integrated building systems, energy and water usage, and design innovation.

Community-Based Urban Design Guidelines for Fort Worth's Historic Northside

Dennis Chiessa, Liliana Morales, Angela Uribe, Alexis Chastain, Architecture

Amid accelerating urban growth in North Texas, Fort Worth's Historic Northside faces dual pressures of cultural displacement and speculative redevelopment. The Historic Northside District Architectural + Urban Design Guidelines address this tension by reframing preservation as a driver of equitable urban transformation rather than a constraint on progress. Developed through a collaboration between the Historic Northside District Committee, the City of Fort Worth, and ch_studio, the project translates community values into an implementable design governance framework for the Main Street corridor.

Manufactured Home Attainability in Tarrant and Dallas Counties

Jenifer Reiner, Karabi Bezboruah, Ariadna Reyes-Sanchez & Emily Nwakpuda
Public Affairs & Planning

While approximately 7 percent of US households reside in manufactured homes (MHs) in a variety of tenures (Durst & Sullivan, 2019), manufactured home (MH) parcels are approximately two percent of all residential parcels within the two primary counties in the North Central region, Tarrant and Dallas Counties (DCAD, 2024; TAD, 2024). This paper investigates the “Is there a relationship between MH affordability, accessibility, acceptability, and availability and MH attainability in the municipal development entitlement process in Tarrant and Dallas Counties? What is the variation between the local governments in these two counties in the North Central Texas region?

Additive Manufacturing for Roof Structures:

Improving Geometric Accuracy, Design Flexibility, and Strength

Shadi Nazarian, Negar Ashrafi, and Gaurav Lunawat
Architecture

Traditional construction methods, such as cast-in-place and precast concrete, are constrained by formwork limitations, high costs, material waste, and labor-intensive processes, particularly for complex geometries. 3D concrete printing (3DCP) presents a transformative alternative, enabling customized fabrication without molds, reducing waste, and enhancing geometric precision. This research investigates the potential of 3DCP for fabricating multifaceted roof structures, focusing on its ability to streamline fabrication, enhance design flexibility, and improve geometric precision.

Speculative Ecologies:

AI-Enabled Design Futures for North Texas Cities

Shermeen Yousif, Architecture

This research positions generative artificial intelligence (AI), specifically large language models (LLMs) and deep learning tools trained on architectural, climatic, and socio-spatial datasets, as a catalytic medium for rethinking how cities can evolve without relying on extractive, tabula rasa interventions. Rather than deferring to demolition as the precondition for adaptation and renewal, the work argues for AI-enabled urban imagination that elevates adaptive reuse, micro-infrastructures, and ecological retrofitting as foundational design tactics for future metropolitan resilience.

Evolving Passive Cooling Strategies:

From Vernacular Desert Architecture to Intelligent Sustainable Design for Urban Resilience

Shrutika Sandip Khamitkar & Atefe Makhmalbaf
Architecture

This research explores how passive cooling strategies derived from vernacular desert architecture can inform modern intelligent sustainable design for resilient and adaptable urban environments, identifying transferable principles that bridge climatic differences. The research employs a comparative qualitative case study approach, analyzing two diverse yet conceptually connected examples: the Vernacular Houses of Yazd, Iran and Masdar City, in Abu Dhabi, UAE, designed by Foster + Partners.

A comparative analysis revealed that despite differences in time and technology, both case studies share the same fundamental logic of environmental design solar orientation, compact spatial organization, airflow optimization, and material performance that buffer thermal extremes.

Planning for Maternal Health Equity:

A Literature Review

Vanessa Delgado
Public Affairs & Planning

This proposal presents a literature review that synthesizes existing scholarship across planning, public health, and social science to address the following question: What are the key built environment factors, such as housing quality, transportation access, and neighborhood infrastructure, that contribute to maternal health outcomes among Latinas? By framing maternal health as a place-based and gendered issue, the review explores how planning scholarship has engaged these concerns and identifies where significant gaps remain. Rather than proposing immediate solutions, this literature review focuses on documenting spatial barriers and conceptual gaps within planning scholarship.

AI-based Home Sensing for Community Resilience in Texas

Wei Zhai
Public Affairs & Planning

Texas communities, particularly low-income urban and historically marginalized peri-urban settlements, face significant housing and environmental risks exacerbated by extreme heat and structural inequities.

The work pioneers the indoor sensing of housing informality to make these invisible risks measurable and actionable. The methodology is structured around two interdisciplinary objectives. The first objective is to Assess Environmental Vulnerabilities in Informal Housing. This involves a comprehensive participatory sensing protocol where residents collaborate with researchers to collect real-time indoor/outdoor data using low-cost environmental sensors (like PurpleAir) and professional-grade 3D scanning equipment, including the Insta360 Pro II and mobile LiDAR. This data is used to create AI-based digital twins of six homes, capturing detailed geometry and structural anomalies.

From Campus to Community:

Planning Strategies to Retain UT Arlington Graduates in the City of Arlington

Deden Rukmana &
Samyuktha Sarvanan
Public Affairs & Planning

This research examines how comprehensive planning can enhance the relationship between the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) and the City of Arlington by focusing on strategies to retain graduates in the local community. Utilizing a mixed-methods survey of UTA students, the research explores their aspirations, perceptions of Arlington's livability, and the factors influencing their choices regarding where to live after graduation. The findings will inform the City of Arlington's Comprehensive Plan Update by identifying policies and initiatives—such as affordable housing, job opportunities, urban amenities, and civic engagement programs—that can encourage graduates to live, work, and build their futures in Arlington.

76104 Visioning a Healthy City:

Neighborhood Interventions for a Longer Life Expectancy

Dennis Chiessa, Julia Lindgren, Grant Leevy, Jonathan Horstman,
Architecture

Zip code 76104, located just south of downtown Fort Worth, has the lowest life expectancy in Texas—67 years, nearly a decade shorter than the state average. This disparity is not accidental; it reflects generations of policy and infrastructural decisions that divided communities, restricted opportunity, and shaped environmental conditions.

Visioning a Healthy City reframes this challenge as a design question. Developed in collaboration with BRAVE/R Together, a local community organization, the project proposes a neighborhood-scale framework that links health equity to the physical environment. It translates public-health data into spatial strategies that improve air quality, mobility, food access, housing, and long-term stewardship.

Design Capital in the Borderlands:

How First-generation Latinas Reimagine the Future Metropolis

Lorena Toffer, Architecture

Architectural education emphasizes individual achievement and studio immersion, which implicitly casts family responsibilities, job, and community commitments as distractions from design success. For first-generation Latinas, these are critical sources of strength, identity development, and design knowledge. This paper is a call to action, drawn from an ongoing asset-based dissertation study on the lived experience of nine first-generation Latina graduates in architecture. It investigates how their perceptions of Identity, Sense of Belonging, and Community Cultural Wealth inform their academic journey.

DDRA

DDRA= {DE}nsify + {DE}Pave + {RE}Think Arlington

Nubras Samayeen, Architecture

The project envisions versatile futures for Downtown Arlington. Both Arlington and the greater DFW region exemplify what can be described as an asphalt city—a landscape dominated by vacant lots, surface parking, and paved voids that hinder urban vitality and spatial continuity. The selected studio site for Fall 2025 (ARCH 3553) is a surface parking lot located at the corner of West Front Street and North Center Street in Downtown Arlington. Currently serving as a parking facility and a weekly farmers' market site, the space is bounded by a freight rail line on one side. The overarching goal of this studio is to explore the transformation of contemporary urban spaces, particularly those that are vacant, residual, or underutilized, and to question how they might be reimagined as catalysts for social and ecological regeneration.

Transport Poverty and Employment Outcomes in a Dallas Unincorporated Community

Ariadna Reyes Sanchez, Julene Paul, & Josh Newton
Public Affairs & Planning

Sand Branch is an unincorporated subdivision located in Dallas County about 20 miles from downtown Dallas.

To address the relationship between transport poverty and employment outcomes in this unique context, we surveyed 75 Sand Branch residents about their household resources, levels of automobile access, travel behavior, and employment status. These surveys capture data on 76 percent of the occupied lots in Sand Branch and 80 percent of residents. Our data address two central research questions: alongside automobile ownership, do broader social disadvantage factors—including previous institutionalization, race and ethnicity, citizenship status, health status, housing tenure, and social capital—influence transport poverty and employment outcomes for individuals in peripheral unincorporated communities? If so, how?

Bus Transit-Oriented Design for a More Equitable Trinity Metro System in Fort Worth, Texas

Ayushi Mavuduru, Architecture

This two-part research project and design proposal explores how Bus Transit Oriented Design (BTOD) can improve quality of life for low income and minority transit-dependent riders, while also attracting choice ridership to displace car usage. This project begins with an evaluation of the Trinity Metro bus system and culminates in a parking reclamation proposal at the Vickery Boulevard Park and Ride, south of Texas and Pacific Station in Fort Worth. As an interdisciplinary sustained investigation, this proposal for Bus Transit Oriented design in Fort Worth designs for a future Metropolis with respect to both regional systems and integration by proposing an urban design intervention to connect bus, rail, rideshare, and biking; and community centered placemaking in the form of a thriving urban park and transit village.

Healthcare Accessibility for Medicare and Medicaid Populations in the Dallas–Fort Worth Area

Mahdis Hamisi, Jianling Li,
Qisheng Pan
Public Affairs & Planning

This study seeks to understand how public transit influences healthcare access for Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries in the DFW region by addressing two key questions: (1) How does geographic location shape the experience of transportation barriers to healthcare? and (2) How are socioeconomic factors, such as insurance type, income level, and age, associated with the prevalence and type of transportation-related barriers?

This study will employ network-based spatial accessibility analysis within a Geographic Information System (GIS) framework to evaluate healthcare access via public transit for Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries in the Dallas–Fort Worth (DFW) metropolitan area.

To review full abstracts and see more CAPPA Forum information, please scan QR code below:

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CAPPA FORUM 2026

Studio Project Abstracts

La Esperanza Community Center:

Transforming a vacant school into a community hub through design, diversity, and collaboration

Lorena Toffer, Architecture

La Esperanza Community Center was a collaborative initiative focused on the adaptive reuse of a former elementary school in Dallas, Texas. Rooted in environmental justice and community cultural wealth, the project intentionally wove together diverse perspectives: university students and faculty, high school youth, civic leaders, nonprofit organizations, professional mentors, and neighborhood residents, to reimagine the vacant school as a hub integrating education, wellness, cultural programming, and economic opportunity. The project was grounded in the multicultural richness of its context.

Bay Court

Mateo Guio, Keilah Elliot, &
Kevin Nguyen
Architecture

Through a co-creative and transdisciplinary design process, Project Bay Court establishes a climate-responsive typology providing elevated housing on stilts as a replicable prototype for flood-adaptive urbanism. The project integrates structural elevation with hydrological permeability, reinterpreting the stilt house as a modular and infrastructurally networked unit within a larger ecological matrix. Elevated residential clusters are interconnected through permeable ground planes, bio-retentive corridors, and collective platforms that function alternately as social spaces and flood-adaptive surfaces. The structural system employs composite materials optimized for corrosion resistance and load distribution, while the landscape operates as a dynamic water management field capable of absorption, filtration, and tidal exchange.

Resilient Archipelago:

Upcycling Dredge Material to Co-create Habitable Islands

Jackie Vuong, Reagan Smith, & Randall Alejandro
Architecture

Through a co-creative design process, the Resilient Archipelago project emerges as a climate-responsive typology to meet this challenge. This concept uniquely addresses a major regional liability—abundant dredge material—by upcycling it to co-create a series of new, habitable islands. This "Habitable Archipelago" is engineered to be resilient and functional, turning a waste product into a valuable asset.

Designing the Future Metropolis:

Community-Centered, Intelligent, and Resilient Mobility Solutions in Downtown Arlington

Tongbin Qu, Kacy Gray, & Amanda Maloch
Landscape Architecture

The project's primary goal is to design a comprehensive and adaptive mobility and parking strategy for downtown Arlington—an area poised for rapid transformation due to ongoing redevelopment, increased tourism, and expanding university and cultural activities. Using a data-driven, context-sensitive approach, students assessed the existing mobility infrastructure, identified critical deficiencies, and explored strategies to make parking and transportation more efficient, accessible, and environmentally sustainable.

Linking Park:

A Floating Community Resilience Hub

Tobias Maiden, &
Jacqueline Garcia-Hernandez
Architecture

Emerging from a transdisciplinary and co-creative design framework, Linking Park: A Floating Community Resilience Hub establishes a climate-responsive architectural prototype that unifies socio-economic activation and ecological restoration. Conceived as a modular buoyant platform, the project accommodates tourism programs, micro-enterprise zones, aquaculture, and public gathering spaces while providing an adaptive buffer against flooding. Its hydrodynamically stabilized modules are engineered for incremental expansion, allowing spatial reconfiguration according to seasonal, ecological, and demographic shifts. Embedded environmental technologies—such as biofiltration wetlands, oyster reef cultivation, and photovoltaic integration—enhance ecosystem services, water quality, and energy autonomy.

Delta Pier:

A Looping Urban Landscape Above the Bay

Frances Walker &
Eylul Cetinkanat
Architecture

Through a co-creative design methodology involving environmental engineers, city stakeholders, and community participants, Delta Pier emerges as a refined climate-responsive typology. Raised on a stilted structural system, the project is engineered to accommodate periodic flooding, manage water retention within integrated basins, and function as a distributed wave-breaker through its porous understructure. Programmatically, the pier incorporates a market hall positioned at the site's entrance to anchor economic activity; a hotel designed to meet overflow lodging demands during peak tourism seasons and large civic events; an amphitheater oriented toward the bay to host cultural programming and optimize views; and a two-level landscape network connected by an elevated pedestrian walkway that enhances community mobility, recreation, and wellbeing.

Rethinking Tomorrow's Metropolis Through the Lens of Utopian Experiments

Belen Butragueno Diaz-Guerra,
Architecture

This research presents a teaching experience developed in a first-year architecture course designed to introduce students to spatial thinking and graphic language. The course brings students into architectural conversations through the visionary urban experiments of the 1960s and 1970s by groups such as Archigram, Archizoom, Metabolists or Yona Friedman. These collectives responded to rapid urbanization, the rise of private transportation, technological optimism, and frustration with the limits of modernist planning. These issues closely mirror those seen today in metropolitan regions like Metroplex. Their projects proposed new models for living in increasingly dense cities and challenged dominant postwar urban frameworks.

The Living Tree

"Rooted in history, growing toward resilience."

Monica Maldonado-Griego &
Steven Flores
Architecture

Artificial Intelligence was integrated not as a replacement for human creativity but as a collaborative design partner, augmenting analysis, visualization, and iteration. The Living Tree utilized AI to synthesize contextual, environmental, and architectural intelligence, bridging data-driven decision-making with human intuition.

AI Tools and Process: The design incorporated a multi-platform AI ecosystem, including Midjourney, xFigura, and custom LoRA-trained models.

Wave Port

A Multimodal Transportation Hub Enhancing Coastal Resilience

Eylul Cetinkanat &
Frances Walker
Architecture

Wave Port is a climate-adaptive, multimodal transportation hub designed to strengthen the resilience and connectivity of the Corpus Christi Bay area in the face of intensifying climate pressures. As coastal cities increasingly experience sea-level rise, storm surge, and chronic flooding, critical infrastructures such as airports, ports, and transit corridors face operational and structural vulnerabilities. Corpus Christi's coastal geography—where aviation, maritime, and terrestrial systems intersect—requires an integrated, elevated, and adaptive solution that ensures continuity of mobility, safety, and emergency access under extreme environmental conditions.

Island Park:

A Resilient Community Concept

Hortence Keita, Architecture

A Climate-Responsive Typology Through a co-creative design process, Island Park emerges as a climate-responsive typology that both absorbs environmental change and restores ecological balance. The project envisions a resilient residential peninsula where floating homes rise and fall with the tides, transforming risk into renewal. The surrounding park operates as a living infrastructure; an absorbent green landscape that mitigates flooding, filters stormwater, and provides public gathering spaces for recreation and cultural life. A Crucial Addition to Corpus Christi Bay: As part of the Corpus Christi Bay system, the project serves as both a social and ecological catalyst. It reconnects the city's urban core with its waterfront through networks of trails, canals, and green corridors.

Float Link:

An Emergency Terminal to Enhance Coastal Resilience

Jacqueline Garcia-Hernandez, &
Tobias Maiden
Architecture

Through a collaborative and iterative design methodology, Float Link: An Emergency Terminal to Enhance Coastal Resilience proposes a climate-responsive architectural typology that synthesizes transport infrastructure and emergency refuge within a single floating system. The project operates as a modular, buoyant terminal designed to facilitate multimodal water transit while simultaneously serving as a temporary shelter during extreme weather events. Engineered through a prefabricated, interlocking module system, Float Link's structural buoyancy and distributed load capacity allow it to dynamically adjust to fluctuating water levels and wave action. Integrated photovoltaic arrays and rainwater harvesting systems further enhance its autonomy and post-disaster performance.

Storm Pods

Max Dunne, Ryan Elliot, &
Hortence Keita
Architecture

Developed through a co-creative design process combining site mapping, environmental modeling, and scenario-based planning, Storm Pods proposes such a typology: a climate-responsive, future-fit motel for storm-prone coastal regions. The project is organized as a field of modular, elevated or floating units that can be incrementally added, relocated, or reoriented relative to prevailing winds, surge pathways, and docking needs. In normal conditions, each pod functions as short-stay accommodation; during storm events, the same units shift into a protected, semi-off-grid shelter mode with integrated storage zones, potential battery backup, and consolidated, weather-protected circulation spines.

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CAPPA FORUM 2026

Poster Abstracts

Community-Led Environmental Justice and Reparative Planning in Sandbranch, Texas

Aisha Owusu
Public Affairs & Planning

Sandbranch, Texas—an unincorporated freedmen's settlement established in the 1870s just twelve miles from downtown Dallas—remains one of the most enduring cases of infrastructural neglect and racialized environmental inequality in North Texas. Despite its proximity to one of the nation's most advanced metropolitan regions, Sandbranch has existed for decades without piped water, sewer systems, or municipal services, embodying what Durst and Wegmann (2017) define as informality through exclusion. Situated within the theoretical frameworks of urban informality (Roy, 2005), radical and insurgent planning (Miraftab, 2009), decolonial urbanism (Watson, 2009), and reparative planning (Williams, 2020), this research also draws upon environmental justice theory (Bullard, 2018) to examine how the racialized production of space translates into uneven environmental exposure and vulnerability.

Fracking and Environmental Injustice:

Assessing Exposure to Pollutants among Texas Schoolchildren

Evan Mistur, Julene Paul,
Aisharya Bhattacharjee, &
Ariana Grant
Public Affairs & Planning

Fracking is increasingly a source of concern in Texas. The confluence of fracking resources and dense population creates the potential for environmental harms, heightening concerns for previously underexplored groups such as schoolchildren who are both more vulnerable to pollutants and unable to influence decisions about the siting of negative facilities. We compile geolocated data on active fracking sites from the Texas Railroad Commission and school data from the US Department of Education to investigate the extent of environmental injustices imposed by fracking interests on communities across the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex. Using spatially weighted statistical modeling, we measure the rate of exposure to fracking wells experienced by school children and assess the extent to which these hazards are disproportionately imposed on schools with higher rates of poverty, lower performance, and higher shares of minority students.

Characterization of Parameters Affecting Personal Thermal Comfort Models used in Occupant-Centric Building Controls

Atefe Makhmalbaf &
Kayvon Khodahemmati
Architecture

In the U.S., buildings consume about 40% of total energy consumption. Despite the tremendous technological advancements in the area of HVAC control, building control systems have failed to inclusively balance energy savings and occupant thermal comfort. Thermal comfort is a critical workplace equity issue.

Thermal comfort is not a uniform response, but rather the result of diverse demographic, behavioural, and environmental influences—making it a critical workplace inclusion and equity issue, as it varies significantly based on occupants' characteristics such as age, gender, ethnicity, metabolic rate, and health condition.

To better understand this variability, in this study, occupants' thermal comfort levels, demographic information, and energy saving preferences were collected from 366 occupants across different building and office types by conducting and analyzing a web-based survey at University of Texas in Arlington. Data collected include age range, gender, tolerance for temperature change, attitude towards saving energy and environmental sustainability.

Transit-Oriented Development in Arlington Utilizing Geospatial Data and Grasshopper

Samyuktha Saravanan &
Deden Rukmana
Architecture & Public Affairs & Planning

This research will propose various methods and results of implementing transit-oriented development (TODs) within the city of Arlington. TODs are defined as mixed-use residential or commercial areas that aim to maximize access to public transportation, according to Arlington's 2015 comprehensive plan. The intentional placement of various types of TODs and architectural transit typologies will depend on Geographic Information System (GIS) data collection to then be input into architectural software, Grasshopper, to accurately design infrastructure and inform potential planners and architects where such typologies could potentially exist in Arlington, along with their benefits and costs.

Safe Station:

A Resilient Mobility Hub for Emergency Response

Farruh Farhodov &
Dyan Monzon
Architecture

Safe Station is a modular bus station designed to provide resilience and mobility during emergencies such as hurricanes and flooding. The station's dimensions are carefully calibrated to integrate seamlessly into existing parking spaces, allowing rapid deployment without the need for extensive planning or site modifications. This flexibility ensures that Safe Station can be positioned in multiple urban or suburban contexts, enabling emergency transportation networks to remain operational when traditional infrastructure is compromised.

Fabricated Flexibility:Fabricated Flexibility:

Digital Tools and the Future of Small-Scale Living in DFW

Grant Leevy & Julia Lindgren,
Architecture

Within DFW, rapid population growth, rising land values, and the increase in apartment oriented development have created a new expectation for how residents navigate domestic space. This shift introduces space-saving architecture as a threshold between different stages of life going from living with parents to living alone to living as a family in a single family home. The transition from a detached home to a compact unit alters how individuals understand privacy, efficiency, and personal space. Texans who are accustomed to spreading outward are beginning to adjust to the idea of living closer together, and the architectural response must accommodate this change without compromising comfort or usability. Modular built-ins, transformable furniture, and multi-functional partitions have emerged as key components in negotiating limited square footage while maintaining flexibility.

Redevelopment as Restoration:

Integrating Policy, Design, and Culture in North Texas Communities

Jordon Drumgoole
Landscape Architecture

This study examines the intersection of heritage, policy, and design in two historic Black settlements along the Trinity River: Garden of Eden and Mosier Valley in Fort Worth. Originally established as self-sufficient Freedom Colonies by emancipated families, these communities now exist within industrialized landscapes, bearing traces of agrarian life amid contemporary neglect. Through historical research, GIS analysis, field documentation, and integrated policy and design proposals, the project reconceptualizes these settlements as models for equitable, sustainable, and human-centered urban development. The case studies provide a framework for navigating the persistent tension between preservation and urban growth.

Uninvited Guests:

Identifying and Replacing Invasive Plants at UTA

Kayli Nauls
Landscape Architecture

Plants are essential for a thriving environment, encouraging biodiversity and creating harmony between the urban environment and nature. However, the wrong kinds of plants can disrupt the balance, harming native ecosystems and local wildlife. This research project investigates the presence and impact of invasive plant species across the University of Texas at Arlington's campus, which lies within two different ecoregions: the Cross Timbers and the Texas Blackland Prairies. The study identifies where invasive species reside on campus, examines their environmental effects, and explores eco-regionally native alternatives that could serve as more sustainable substitutes. Tools such as ArcGIS, iNaturalist, and various plant databases, such as the Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center database, the Native Plant Society of Texas database, and the USDA Plants database, are used for mapping and identification.

Punctuated Equilibrium Theory:

The Case of Public Health Regulations and Implications for Metropolitan Resilience

Noah Hendrix
Public Affairs & Planning

This poster investigates how Punctuated equilibrium theory (PET) dynamics function in technocratic environments by examining the patterns change in regulations managed by the FDA and the implications for local policymakers.

Methods: This study uses text analysis to examine changes to the FDA's regulations for Investigational Device Exemptions (IDE) (21 CFR 812) and Investigational New Drugs (IND) (21 CFR 312). These regulations represent a technical set of policies that have been maintained by a single bureaucratic agency (the FDA) and housed in a single Part of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) for their entire history, offering a unique opportunity to assess how policies change over time.

Bridging Capacity and Need:

Organizational Inequities and Food Insecurity Across Texas Food Banks

Marylin D Rozario &
Karabi Bezboruah
Public Affairs & Planning

This study examines how disparities in financial, human, and infrastructural capacity shape food insecurity across Texas food banks. Using mixed methods, the analysis reveals that rural and border food banks face the highest insecurity but have the least resources, while urban food banks demonstrate stronger capacity and innovation. Findings highlight that uneven capacity perpetuates inequities, underscoring the need for targeted investments to strengthen nonprofit resilience and equity.

Co-creating a Smart Coast:

Bridging Human & Artificial Intelligence in Architecture and Urbanism

Oswald Jenewein, Kelvin Awour, Sultan Jarbouh, Karabi Bezboruah, & Michelle Hummel, Architecture

The Smart Coast Initiative at the University of Texas at Arlington applies this collaborative approach through research in architecture and urbanism along the Texas Coastal Bend. Faculty, students, engineers, planners, and residents co-create adaptive strategies that connect environmental data with community priorities. Projects such as Visualizing Coastal Hazards and Coastal Bend Vision 2050 demonstrate how AI-assisted visualization strengthens engagement and turns dialogue into design outcomes that inform planning and policy.

This poster presents the Smart Coast Initiative as a case study of how human and artificial intelligence can work together in architecture and urbanism to foster participatory resilience. It illustrates how design thinking and technological tools merge with community engagement to make adaptation visible, collective, and actionable, envisioning a more sustainable and adaptive Texas Coast.

Small-Scale Green Infrastructure in Urban Networks - Trinity Presbyterian Church as a Pilot Project

Selvana Getsy Lnu, Landscape Architecture

The study employs a mixed-methods research design. It combines site inventory and analysis, expert and stakeholder interviews, church member surveys, and an interactive design preference activity for the community members. The hydrological assessments locate erosion and drainage problems that result from high impervious coverage and inefficient landscape structure. Social data point to limited green infrastructure (GI) awareness at the start; however, they indicate also a strong enthusiasm for sustainable, low-maintenance landscape improvements like rain gardens, native plantings, shaded seating areas, and attractive educational features.

Robotic Fabrication and Housing Resilience:

Craft, Concrete, and the Future of Semi-Urban Living

Shane Pellerin, Shadi Nazarian, Negar Ashrafi, Brad Bell, Architecture

The research focuses on geopolymer and low-carbon concrete mixes suited for robotic printing—offering reductions in both environmental impact and construction waste. These materials form the basis for a kit-of-parts system, adaptable to varied semi-urban and suburban contexts where traditional timber construction faces challenges of cost, durability, and long-term maintenance.

Through iterative prototyping and full-scale experimentation, the work tests how fabrication intelligence can yield regionally-specific building components—structural shells, shading systems, and enclosures that express both material performance and craftsmanship.

Typologies of Transition:

Assessing three residential housing typologies in service of former foster youth in the DFW metroplex

Ayushi Mavuduru, Architecture

This project addresses the ownership, privacy, and security needs of former foster youth, while parallelly engaging with the NIMBIYism supportive housing projects of this nature bring with them. These issues are addressed through spatial organization and experiential narratives that propose approaches scale and form harmonious to the surrounding single-family homes, as well as through the integration of greenspace at both the public and individual levels. Together these three typologies respond to the varying needs of former foster youth in terms of peer support, mentoring and case management from older adults, and individual ownership of space. Special attention is given to facade design and tectonic characteristics that provide light and ventilation to the residences giving dignity to the built form of each typology, and, by extension, its inhabitants.

The Influence of Neighborhood Quality on Children's Heal

Nazmun Akter Pia
Public Affairs & Planning

Using data from the 2022 National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH), this study examines how neighborhood quality, such as safety, social cohesion, available amenities, and presence of physical disorder, affects children's physical and mental health.

This research focuses on school-aged children (5–17 years) and employs multivariate logistic regression to examine associations between neighborhood socio-physical quality and children's overall well-being. The study investigates the following research questions:

1. How is neighborhood quality associated with children's general physical health and mental health (e.g., anxiety, depression)?
2. Do these associations differ across key demographic characteristics (e.g., race/ethnicity, income level)?
3. What implications do these associations have for neighborhood design and urban planning?

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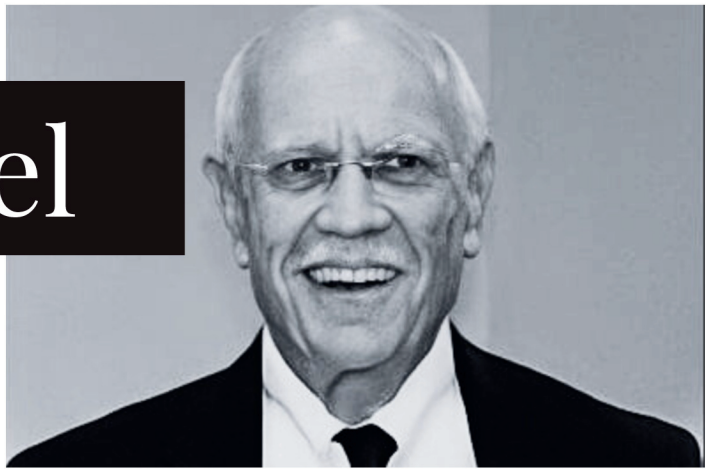

Professor Emeritus Paul Geisel's impact on CAPPA and The University of Texas at Arlington has shaped the college for decades. Through more than 35 years of teaching, mentoring, and community engagement, Dr. Geisel helped define CAPPA's commitment to applied research, equity, and service to North Texas communities. His generosity reflects a belief in empowering students and faculty to work directly with cities and neighborhoods to address real-world challenges.

The Geisel Grants recognize this spirit of mentorship, curiosity, and public service that Professor Geisel exemplified throughout his career. The following pages highlight the Geisel Award recipients, known as Geisel Fellows, whose work continues his legacy of learning, leadership, and meaningful impact.

Geisel Grant Winners

Tiny-Home Design Build
Creating an Arlington Micro-Community (Project 1)
Charles MacBride, Brad McCorkle – Architecture

Human-AI Collaboration
Utilizing Generative AI for Participatory Design Processes
Dr. Oswald Jenewein – Architecture

Housing Precarity and Transit Oriented Development in North Texas
Mobile Home Residents' Perceptions of TOD in Tarrant County
Dr. Julene Paul – Public Affairs and Planning

A Smart Growth Assessment and Policy Process Map for the City of Lavon, TX
Dr. Hannah Lebovits – Public Affairs and Planning

Reimagining Current and Future Resident Engagement in the Arlington Cultural District
Dr. Emily Nwakpuda, Dr. Karabi Bezboruah – Public Affairs and Planning

Community-Based Comprehensive Plan for the Garden of Eden, Fort Worth
Protecting the Community's Legacy Through Sustainable Landscape Planning (Project 1)
Dr. Joowon Im, Dennis Chiessa, Letora Anderson, & Dr. Diane Allen – Landscape Architecture & Architecture

Understanding Informal Healthcare and Roles of Health Fairs for Underserved Communities
Dr. Jiwon Suh – Public Affairs & Planning

A Community Engaged Approach Critical to Energy Efficiency Systems
Drs. Atefe Makhmalbaf & Narjes Abbasabadi – Architecture

Blue-Green Neighborhood Beautification Design Guidelines & Pilot Project
The Bottom District, Dallas (Project 2)
Dr. Joowon Im – Landscape Architecture

Examining Environmental Injustices
Mapping hyper-local air quality in low-income informal communities in Dallas Counties
Drs. Ariadna Reyes Sánchez & Evan Mistur – Public Affairs & Planning

Tax Increment Financing and Equitable Development
The Case of Dallas
Drs. Jiseul Kim & Evan Mistur

An Arlington Micro-Community:
Documenting Wynn Terrace (Project 2)
Charles MacBride, Brad McCorkle – Architecture

DESIGNING THE FUTURE METROPOLIS

UTA College of Architecture, Planning and Public Affairs