

City and Regional Planning  
Strategic Plan  
Spring, 2005

**Our Mission**

The mission of the City and Regional Planning Program is to be the national leader in education and research on planning for sustainable cities and regions. Through our combined efforts in teaching, research, and public service, we will contribute to a greater understanding of patterns of human development and promote changes to those patterns to achieve more sustainable cities and regions. The Program will continue to capitalize on its unique position within Georgia Tech, the Atlanta metropolitan area and the southeast region, to link its academic pursuits to professional practice and service to communities.

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century will be the first truly “urban century” – more of the U.S population will live in cities than in rural areas. This accelerated trend towards “urbanization” presents unique opportunities and challenges for the field of planning as we seek to understand the linkages between diverse humans and their activities and the natural and built environment. The City and Regional Planning Program at Georgia Tech will build upon its leadership role in developing new knowledge, educating practitioners and citizens, and finding sustainable solutions for our nation’s cities and regions.

We have developed this mission by understanding and enhancing our current strengths:

- Our students are smart, talented, passionate, and extremely hard-working. During their education at Georgia Tech, they work on “real world” problems throughout the southeast region and beyond – combining learning from books with learning by doing.
- Collectively, our faculty members have strong theoretical, practical, and methodological areas of expertise for understanding cities and regions, development processes, the built environment, and human and natural capital.
- We have a long history of synthesizing knowledge from multiple academic disciplines and developing the necessary interdisciplinary collaborations to work for the betterment of cities and regions. In particular, we note our long-standing formal relationships through dual degree programs with civil engineering (in transportation) and architecture (in urban design). To these core allied fields, we have added dual degree programs or certificate programs with law, environmental engineering, public policy, heritage preservation, and real estate.
- Through our pedagogy and our service efforts, we take this understanding out of our academic setting and put it into practice in nearby cities, regions, and states – testing our understanding, adapting our recommendations, and studying the consequences of changed policies, plans, and planning processes.
- We have an outstanding and highly dedicated set of Program alumni and friends who provide support, advice, and assistance to our Program, students, and faculty. We also maintain outstanding relationships with key planning agencies and professional organizations throughout the region and the state.
- We have also spawned two active research centers, the Center for Geographic Information Systems and the Center for Quality Growth and Regional Development, both of which have outstanding technical expertise and substantive areas of focus that support our Program’s mission.

**Our Vision**

With this realistic assessment of our Program’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges, we have developed a shared vision for our future:

*To be the leading academic program in planning and designing sustainable urban settlements for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

## Our Goals and Objectives

1. Provide the highest quality education for our master's students to help them become effective practitioners and assume leadership roles in the planning profession
  - Maintain an active and state of the art presence of technology in the curriculum
  - Recruit the highest quality faculty to teach courses in our Program
  - Enhance our teaching, research, and studio facilities for our students
  - Encourage students to assume leadership positions on campus, in the community, and in professional organizations while they are enrolled in our Program and afterwards
  - Increase the number and stature of campus, regional, and national awards received by students in the Program
  - Ensure that high quality, influential, and noteworthy studio projects are conducted by our master's students with appropriate instruction by permanent faculty
  - Encourage students to participate in professional organizations, conferences, and certification efforts
  - Routinely review and update our curriculum to reflect advances in planning education and practice
2. Advance the state of knowledge of sustainable urban settlements
  - Increase the number of publications produced by Program faculty and students
  - Enhance the distribution of faculty and doctoral student publications through improved distribution networks for publications and presentations
  - Continue to strengthen the Ph.D. field concentration in city and regional planning
    - Increase the number, diversity, and quality of doctoral students
    - Increase the quantity of secure funding available to support doctoral students
    - Provide appropriate doctoral student space for research, study and collaboration
    - Require teaching for doctoral students as demonstration of our commitment to produce prospective faculty members to teach in other Planning Programs throughout the world
3. Transform planning practice by integrating knowledge and action
  - Emphasize in our teaching, outreach, and research the need for collaborative and trans-disciplinary efforts to address urban problems and planning solutions
  - Conduct key public outreach and professional education efforts and community
  - Produce a working paper series, designed for practitioners, with key results from studio, option paper, and faculty research
  - Create a faculty liaison position for each of the key agencies or organizations with which the program should interact
  - Conduct studio projects to advance current planning practice in communities
4. Expand our Program's presence on campus and expose a larger number of students to issues associated with sustainable urban settlements
  - Develop a feasibility plan for a new undergraduate major
  - Enhance the enrollment of a diverse set of students into our current undergraduate courses
  - Recruit students from Atlanta region universities and colleges (in particular, Georgia State, Morehouse, Spelman, and others) to enroll in our current undergraduate planning courses
5. Expand synergies among faculty, researchers, students, staff of the CRP Program with other programs, centers, and institutes across campus and throughout the region focusing on issues of sustainability
  - Expand the joint teaching of courses in all areas in which we have dual degree programs
  - Conduct "brown bag" lunches with academic faculty, students, and research staff from research centers throughout campus to discuss research projects, programs, and future opportunities.

- Identify key research priorities and work to secure funding in relevant areas of sustainability with faculty from various programs and centers
  - Examine options for the co-location of CRP Program with research centers in allied fields
6. Promote diversity among our faculty and student body (sex, race, ethnicity, age, etc.)
- Enhance alumni efforts in recruiting a diverse student population
  - Create additional fellowships to support outstanding students/recruits for students of color
  - Develop an outreach and recruitment program to local colleges to encourage minority students to take our current undergraduate courses and then apply for our master's program
  - Enhance current faculty recruitment efforts to increase the number of Program faculty of color
  - Increase the age diversity of the faculty to avoid major faculty transitions associated with retirements
7. Maintain outreach to Georgia's low and moderate income communities
- Continue to conduct studio projects targeted toward low income and underserved communities
  - Enhance the Program's role in the Atlanta Outreach Consortium
  - Explore opportunities and engage in funded and unfunded efforts with DCA, HUD, ARC, Fannie Mae Foundation, Community Design Center, and others for continued research in lower income and underserved neighborhoods
8. Enhance levels of external funding to support the Program's mission and vision
- Enhance our current GRA Co-op Program by "regularizing" the commitment of support for our master's students
  - Secure long-term research contracts to support faculty and Ph.D. student recruitment
  - Enhance efforts in the private sector to support additional fellowships, Co-op opportunities, and endowments to provide for student support, facility improvements, and research seed grants
9. Implement a Strategic Communications Program to support this Strategic Plan
- Provide regular communication with the College, our alumni, our employers about the accomplishments of our Program's faculty, staff, students, and alumni
  - Create awards for excellence in planning (outstanding public officials, superb plans, successful implementation, outstanding mentoring)
  - Conduct symposia and public presentations with prominent speakers on current and future topics in the region and the nation
  - Work more closely and strategically with our Institute communications staff on publicizing Program events and accomplishments
  - Develop a "Planning in K-12 schools" program to discuss planning and planning issues, that would be delivered by master's students as part of their program here at Tech