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Cal Poly Team Wins First Place In International Earthquake Design Competition

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- A Cal Poly team of two College of Architecture and Environmental Design faculty members and one student won first place in the international competition Design for Post-Earthquake Resilience of Cities.

Landscape Architecture Assistant Professor [Cesar Torres-Bustamante](#), lecturer [Louise Schiller](#), and city and regional planning graduate student Schani Siong won for their proposal, "City Map." The proposal used Acapulco, Mexico, as the site to test a low-budget, easily implemented strategy that focused on assigning new uses to existing transport infrastructure after an earthquake hits.

The city transforms into a "map of itself," using streets as a canvas to connect nodes through painted paths, similar to the lines on hospital floors that guide patients to particular sections in a hospital. These paths indicate evacuation routes and locations of shelters, hospitals, food supplies and more.

The project assigns new uses to infrastructure: major streets will be closed to vehicular traffic and will be used instead as landing strips for aircrafts that bring supplies; two-way streets will reduce to one-way streets to accommodate temporary housing, workshops, markets and schools; street parking will be removed on alternate blocks to provide space to grow food.

The competition, organized by the [New Zealand Society for Earthquake Engineering](#), sought proposals to increase the resiliency of cities and communities affected by earthquakes and tsunamis, with an emphasis on aiding recovery and social regeneration in affected areas. The competition was open to all design disciplines, including architecture, landscape architecture, urban planning and associated engineering and sociological disciplines.

The first-place award came with a cash prize of \$2,000 (New Zealand dollars).

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