

Research



In January, the students began researching the history, economy, and demographics of Paradise in order to better understand its people and culture. At the same time, they did research on town planning concepts and historical precedents in order to identify elements that might be recreated in Paradise.

Outreach



Later in January and in February, the students visited Paradise to gain first-hand understanding of the situation on the ground. On the trips, they also met with residents and other stakeholders, asking them to confirm the results of the initial research and to provide their own impressions and priorities for what was needed in the rebuilt town.

Design



In February and March, the students began their design work, looking first at the town as a whole and considering how the town pattern might be improved. Later, they began contemplating the types of specific uses—that is, new building projects—that might be located within the new town plan.

Process

In November of 2018, a wildfire devastated the town of Paradise, destroying ninety percent of its buildings and killing 86 residents. Shortly thereafter, over the course of six months in early 2019, two third-year design studios in Cal Poly's Architecture program worked to develop ideas to rebuild Paradise in the wake of the fire.

The theme of the studios' work was resiliency. One aspect of this was physical safety: how to rebuild in such a way so as to protect the town against future conflagrations. At the same time, the students considered resiliency in other terms, including the Paradise's economy, connection to nature, and sense of community.

This poster describes the progression of the students' work over the six months - from initial research and site visits, to meetings with town residents and other stakeholders to garner input and feedback, and finally, to the development and presentation of new town plans and buildings.

Goals

- Reconnect Nature
- Rethink Infrastructure
- Rethink Mobility
- Reunite Community
- Rethink Town Living
- Redefine Economy

Verification



In April, the students returned to Paradise to make public presentations of their preliminary town planning ideas and building designs. These were opportunities for the residents of Paradise to critique the designs. In the process, the students began outlining the overarching goals that might best serve the community.

Refinement



In May, the students continued to refine their building designs in terms of technical systems but also in terms of fitting them into an overall vision for the town's future.

Advocacy



In late May and early June, the students wrapped up their projects, making final presentations in Paradise and Chico. They also made presentations to California state officials in Sacramento, as well as to Cal Poly officials and advisors, in each case advocating support for redeveloping Paradise in ways that will sustain it in the future.