



# News

University News & Information



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## Cal Poly City & Regional Planning Students Honored for City of Milpitas Land Use Project

SAN LUIS OBISPO — A team of undergraduate students from Cal Poly's City & Regional Planning Department (CRP) received three California American Planning Association awards for their work on the City of Milpitas land use project:

The California American Planning Association (APA) gave the students its Award of Merit for Academic Excellence. The students' work also earned the California Northern Chapter APA Award of Academic Excellence and the California Central Coast Chapter APA Award of Academic Excellence.

In 2013, third-year students in the class Urban Design III: Community Design Lab collaborated with Milpitas' Planning and Neighborhood Services Department to develop a land use and urban design study and visioning process. Of the 29 students involved in the project, three were from Santa Clara County: Clarissa Caruso and Diane Tran, both from San Jose; and Stephanie Benzel, from Fremont.

The project was overseen by Professor Vicente del Rio and Hemalata Dandekar, professor and department head.

"The City of Milpitas encouraged the students to think outside the box and develop visionary alternatives that could be actualized strategically in the long-term general plan," said Dandekar. "This liberated the students and made the academic exercise rich and challenging."

Over the 10-week quarter, the students engaged in rapid information collection, data gathering, consultation with the Bay Area city's planning commission and city staff, and a rigorous planning process. The students developed seven proposals for walkable, memorable, sustainable and energized public spaces.

City planning commissioners and city council members described the ideas as "new, innovative, creative, [and] projecting options for the city that they, as residents for the last 30 or more years, had not thought of."

The city is in negotiations with Cal Poly to continue work toward implementation. Agreement will mean that CRP students and faculty will explore which proposal resonates with the private sector and related agencies in the city.

"This is your world, your future, and I hope we can see these visions become a reality here," said Sudhir Mandal, chair of the Milpitas Planning Commission

### Related Links:

- To view the student-produced compilation video, visit [youtube.com/watch?v=AdHfTbf90U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AdHfTbf90U).
- The proposals can be viewed at [ci.milpitas.ca.gov/government/planning/special\\_projects.asp](http://ci.milpitas.ca.gov/government/planning/special_projects.asp).

– For more on the American Planning Association (APA), go to [planning.org](http://planning.org)

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