Community/University Partnerships for Sustainable Futures

Western Washington University
Dr. Tammi Laninga, AICP, Lindsey MacDonald
Andrew Randall, Cora Bern-Klug, Nick Schmeck

WA APA Conference - October 17, 2019
Presentation Roadmap

1. Speaker Introductions
2. Overview of Sustainable Communities Partnership
3. Case Studies
4. Interactive Break-out Session
5. Partnership Benefits & Best Practices
Speaker Introductions

Dr. Tammi Laninga, AICP - Assistant Professor, Environmental Studies Dept; teaches land use regulations, community development, planning studio & environmental impact assessment courses

Lindsey MacDonald, MS - Sustainable Communities Partnership Coordinator; teaches sustainability courses

Andrew Randall, WWU Urban Planning & Sustainable Development Student, with a minor in GIS

Cora Bern-Klug, WWU Urban Planning & Sustainable Development Student, with a minor in Business Administration

Nick Schmeck, AICP Pilot Program Candidate, WWU Urban Planning & Sustainable Development Student Representative for APA-WA NW Section, Skagit County Permit Technician
Sustainable Communities Partnership

Connecting student energy & faculty expertise with Local community expertise & needs
Sustainable Communities Partnership

In the 4th year of partnerships...

1 County
7 Cities
27 Courses
500 Students
>20,000 hours of work
Sustainable Communities Partnership
WWU UPSD Overview

- Nationally Accredited Undergraduate Program, 2017
- 51 students in the program
- 54% of 2018 graduates hired as planners or in planning related jobs
# Case Study Overviews

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| **Course(s):**      | ● Community Development  
                      ● Transportation Planning  
                      ● Independent Study  
                      ● Environmental Impact Assessment | Land Use Regs & Technical Writing | Planning Studio (fall, winter, spring) | ● Two Internships  
                      ● Biometrics |
Multi-Modal Trail

City of Monroe, WA
City of Monroe
Multimodal Transportation Study

- WWU and City of Monroe conducted public meeting in Fall 2018.
- Winter/Spring 2019 WWU students evaluated nine potential access points to the proposed trail area.
Why Consider a Trail in the US-2 Bypass?

- WSDOT has conditionally approved the parcel for use as a temporary trail.

- What are the potential benefits provided by a new trail?
  - Residents to the north
    - Recreation opportunities
    - Expedited utilitarian trips
  - Future park and trail connectivity

- Why look at multiple entrances?
  - “Reach” provided by each entrance
    - ½ mile distance people will travel to access pedestrian facilities
Process

- GIS Analysis
- Ground Truthing
- Initial Report
- Further Analysis
- APWA Conference
- Final Report

Monroe data collection, February 2019
Deliverables

• Nine Access Points
• GIS Analysis
• Infrastructure Recs
• Final Report
Results of the Study

• Trip distances cut significantly for utilitarian trips
  – The distance traveled would be reduced from an average of 1.85 miles to average of 1.16 miles.
  • Most dramatic reduction of 3.2 miles
    – 3.8 mile trip to 0.65 mile trip

• Percent traveled by trail would increase substantially in some areas
  – The percent traveled by trail increase from an average of 36% to an average of 56%
  • Neighborhoods to shopping center
    – Largest increase from 0% by trail to 52% by trail
Outcomes

City of Monroe:
- Follow-up analysis indicated trail development to the west was unlikely
- Need for trail alignment
- Environmental Impact Assessment

WWU Students:
- Conducting a study
- Report Writing
- Public Works liked it and us

Continued SCP Work:
Fall 2019: Environmental Impact Assessment course project
Future Implications for the City of Monroe

Increased...
Walkability
Distance traveled by trail
Access to nearby local park
Park Connectivity

Access Points

Proposed Trail Design & Features

1: Trail Access Point
2: Bridge Crossing
3: Pet Station
4: Road Crossing

- Proposed Trail Route
Downtown Architectural & Site Design Standards

City of Ferndale, WA
Ferndale Design Standards

• Goals
  – Condense
  – Make code more user and public friendly
  – Coffee table book
Process

• Teams:
  – Architectural & Site Design
  – Applicability & Compliance
  – Special Provisions
• Researched other cities to explore options for Ferndale’s Design Standards
• Discussed various case studies and options in class & with city staff
• Drafted revised Design Standards
  – City Center Zoning
  – Urban Residential Zoning
• Presented to Ferndale Planning Commission
Deliverables

- Revised Design Standard recommendations
- Ferndale Design Manual
Outcomes

Adoption of Revised Downtown Architectural & Site Design Standards (FMC 18.47)
  – August 2019
“Making Downtown a Destination”

Ferndale City Center Plan
Implementation Strategies

WWU Urban Planning & Sustainable Development Program

June 5, 2019
Pioneer Pavilion, Ferndale, WA
Ferndale: September 2018 - June 2019

Studio I: Urban Design Methods
Getting to know Ferndale: Research, Analysis, and Synthesis

January 2019
Fall 2018

Interim Concepts
Community workshop 2: Sharing alternatives, receiving feedback

March 2019

Final Concepts
Community workshop 3: Sharing strategies, priorities, and funding sources

April/May 2019

Studio II: Plan Development
Community workshop 1: land use, mobility, parks, plazas, hazard mitigation and more

June 2019

Studio III: Implementation
Consolidating Concepts, Collecting Insights
Process: Studio 1

3 Teams / 9 Elements

- Ferndale City Center Analysis:
  - Land Use / Development
  - Historic Preservation
  - Transportation
  - Transit
  - Parks, Trails & Hazards Mitigation

- Catalyst Sites
- Ground Truth
- Conclusion: Next Steps
3 Teams / 11 Elements

- Ferndale City Center Community Engagement:
  - Physical Form
  - Land Use x3
  - Mobility x3
  - Parks, Plazas, Public Sphere, Wayfinding
  - Environmental Resources, Natural Hazards
  - Human Capital
  - Capital Facilities & Transportation Improvements x3

- Conclusion: Next Steps
Process Studio: 111

Teams / 8 Elements

● Ferndale City Center Implementation & Funding Plan:
  ○ Land Use & Urban Character
  ○ Affordable Housing
  ○ Mobility, Streetscapes & Parking
  ○ Plazas, Parks, Trails & Hazards Mitigation
● Opportunity Site Analysis
● Implementation and Funding
Deliverables

• Research and Analysis of Ferndale City Center
• Scope and Community Feedback Plan Based on Three Alternatives
• Consolidated Plan Including Implementation Tactics and Funding Opportunities
Ferndale City Center Outcomes

Presented to Ferndale City Council

-July 10, 2019

Continued SCP Work: Fall 2019

Environmental Impact Assessment course project - Boardwalk
Shoreline Management Data Collection and Analysis

City of Bainbridge Island, WA
City of Bainbridge Island: Goals

- To protect shoreline functions and values through the net effect of shoreline regulations and restoration projects.
- Inform adaptive management actions
City of Bainbridge Island: Process

Two interns with faculty/city guidance:

• Identify sites for data collection
• Determine methodology for collecting data
  - Eelgrass and kelp
  - Intertidal beach sediment supply
  - Riparian vegetation
  - Water quality

Biometrics Course with faculty/city guidance:

• Initial analysis of the data
Your turn …

Brainstorm Session
Project Identification

• What are **issues facing your community** that could use a fresh set of eyes?

• What are **planning projects** you would love to work on, but haven’t had time or resources to get to?
Partnership Experience

• Have you worked with universities or other partners in the past? How did it go?

• What information do you need to consider developing a city-university partnership?
Community Planning Assistance Teams (CPAT)

WA APA & Department of Commerce provide planners & other specialists to communities

Objectives:
• Connect plans with actions
• Identify local & regional resources for sustainable planning

Assistance:
• Consultation: telephone or in-person conference between community & CPAT team
• 1-2 day planning charrette (Friday evening/all day Saturday): in-depth analysis and report
CPAT & Universities

• Has your community worked with APA WA - Community Planning Assistance Team (CPAT)? How did that go? What were the outcomes?

• What possibilities do you see for collaboration between WWU & CPAT?
Reflections ...

The Power of Partnerships
The Value of Experiential Education

- Operationalizes classroom learning in real world setting
- Bridges the gap between the university and the community
- Enhances community sustainability through idea-sharing and capacity building
- Creates a catalyst for larger community change

Through service-learning projects, students receive occupational competence that complements their conceptual knowledge and skills (Roakes & Norris-Tirrell, 2000).
Benefits for Students

- Writing Technical Reports
- Designing Alternatives
- Engaging Community Members
- Presenting to the Public
- Interacting with Professional Staff & Elected Officials
- Securing Internships

Working with the community outside of Western (and academia) was very important to me. It made it seem more real and applicable (UPSD Student)

Monroe Public Meeting, Nov 2018
Working on a year-long project with SCP was integral to my senior-year education. I was able to apply my knowledge gained from the job to classes and incorporate class material into problem solving within the SCP project ... I am graduating with a more well-rounded education ... [and] was able to gain hands-on experience that I can take into my professional career. (UPSD Student)
Benefits for Partners

[We] worked with the Sustainable Communities Partnership to explore the future of Downtown Ferndale, to create a vision for the area, and to identify projects (both public and private) that could help realize this vision.... Too often, small communities do not have the resources to work proactively on issues, particularly when communities ... have experienced prolonged change or decline ... SCP combined deep and intentional conversations with community members, with advanced research and design techniques. Ferndale’s 2019 project resulted in ... a groundswell of support for community engagement, a different perspective on an area of our community, and great optimism for the future. (City Administrator)
Best Practices for Community/University Partnerships

- Organizational administrators support partnerships.
- The partners articulate clear expectations.
- The partners create a shared agenda.
- The partners’ capacities are sufficient for the task.
- There is a shared belief that partnerships will be mutually beneficial.
- There is a shared commitment to capacity-building.
- The partners focus on each other’s strengths/assets.
- Partners pay attention to communication and cultivate trust.

Thank you!

Please contact:
Lindsey MacDonald, Sustainable Communities Partnership: macdonl6@wwu.edu

Dr. Tammi Laninga, Urban Planning & Sustainable Development Program: tammi.laninga@wwu.edu