Department of Community and Regional Planning
Iowa State University
Strategic Plan for 2015-20
Approved May 2015

VISION
The Iowa State University Department of Community and Regional Planning will be nationally recognized for planning education, research, and outreach that integrates design, policy, and engagement to build more sustainable and equitable places.

MISSION
Our mission is to improve communities/places and create globally aware citizens through innovative teaching, research, and community engagement.

We educate students to become critical thinkers and engaged global citizens who have the ability to contribute to a better world.

We partner with professional planners to discover and implement best practices to enhance the human experience and improve the natural, social, and built environment.

We engage with communities to create vibrant and sustainable places.

We promote place-based research and inquiry in Iowa and the Midwest

VALUES
We value critical and creative thinking, ethics, social justice and equity, environmental and social responsibility, democratic values, diverse perspectives, collaboration, innovation, uniqueness and interconnectedness of places/people.

GOALS
1. Recruit, retain, and graduate high quality and diverse graduate and undergraduate students.
2. Strengthen students’ critical thinking, analytical, technical and communication skills.
3. Enhance students’ ability to affect change in a global, multicultural, and diverse world.
4. Prepare students who enter the profession of planning to engage in life-long learning and professional development.
5. Conduct innovative faculty and student research that advances planning for more equitable and sustainable communities.
6. Strengthen the planning profession through the dissemination of cutting-edge research and best practices and providing opportunities for continuous learning.
7. Provide opportunities for faculty and students to collaborate with communities to plan a better future.
Goals, Tactics, and Action Plan for 2015-20

The mission statement defines who we are, what we do and how we do it. The department has been working over the course of several years to develop a set of student learning outcomes for the Bachelor of Science in Community and Regional Planning (BSCRP) and Master of Community and Regional Planning (MCRP) programs. As a result, the department’s curriculum goals and objectives (stated below) are a reflection of formally implementing these activities.

Goal 1: Recruit, retain, and graduate high quality and diverse graduate and undergraduate students.
Tactics/Objectives
a. Increase recruitment at the undergraduate level to achieve 40 students in each cohort in five years.
b. Increase recruitment at the graduate level to achieve 20 students in each cohort in five years.
c. Increase the diversity of students (racial and ethnic background) enrolled in all our programs.
d. Improve the department’s web presence and other social media recruitment celebrating departmental accomplishments.
e. Develop a departmental recruitment program to help increase recruitment from within the College of Design, across the university, and beyond the university.
f. Increase the number of students that take planning courses as electives.
g. Create and implement Urban Studies Minor by 2016.
h. Create and implement a GIS Minor by 2016.
i. Increase enrollment in our double-degree graduate programs (MCRP/MARCH; MCRP/MBA; MCRP/MLA; MCRP/MS).
j. Increase our online/distance education course offerings.
k. Increase number of articulation agreements for transferring into the CRP program to at least five community colleges within the next five years.

Goal 2: Strengthen students’ critical thinking, creative abilities, and communication skills.
Tactics/Objectives:
a. Incorporate critical and creative assessments throughout the CRP core curricular.
b. Sequence, develop, and assess student learning in written, oral, and visual communication.
c. Implement student self-assessment measures to help develop professional judgment.
d. Measure student communication learning through CRP 498 (Portfolio Development and Review class).
e. Implement standards for academic achievement.
f. Use student learning measures and assessment to revise and improve curriculum.
Goal 3: Enhance students’ ability to affect change in a global, multicultural, and diverse world.

Tactics/Objectives:
   a. Provide expanded opportunities for study abroad.
   b. Provide opportunities for students to present their work at national and international conferences/workshops.
   c. Focus CRP 391 (Field Travel) learning on understanding of global, cultural, and diversity issues.
   d. Develop ethical judgment throughout curriculum in case studies and assessment.
   e. Use studio classes to expose students to diverse cultures.
   f. Encourage students to pursue internship experiences that expose them to different aspects of the profession.

Goal 4: Prepare students who enter the profession of planning to engage in life-long learning and professional development.

Tactics/Objectives
   a. Initiate a job-preparation mentoring program with alumni to help prepare seniors and second-year graduate students to improve their marketability.
   b. Prepare graduates for careers in the public, private, and not-for-profit sectors.
   c. Solicit Planning Advisory Council (PAC) input regarding skill development and best practices (every other year).
   d. Involve professionals in skill instruction where appropriate.
   e. Provide interdisciplinary and experiential learning opportunities through class projects, internship opportunities, and/or studio offerings.
   f. Implement assessment of professional work in core curriculum subject to measures of student learning.
   g. Involve students in Extension training workshops for community leaders.
   h. Assess student professional learning through CRP 498 (Portfolio Development and Review class).
   i. Improve American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) pass rate by offering exam preparation classes/learning materials to alumni.
   j. Survey alumni every five years to assess career development and department’s contribution to life-long learning.

Goal 5: Conduct innovative faculty and student research that advances planning for more equitable and sustainable communities.

Tactics/Objectives
   a. Expand and strengthen our relationships within the college, across the campus, and with organizations across the region to help engage in interdisciplinary research.
   b. Increase faculty productivity, including publications, conference presentations, etc.
   c. Increase our success in securing research funding.
   d. Increase faculty involvement in multidisciplinary applied research projects.
   e. Increase faculty representation on the editorial boards of professional journals.
   f. Organize at least one major regional conference within the next five years.
g. Expand the use of cutting-edge technology to improve learning and research in the department and the college.

Goal 6: Strengthen the culture of planning through the dissemination of cutting-edge research and best practices and providing opportunities for continuous learning for professional and citizen planners.

Tactics/Objectives
   a. Organize workshops for planners and other stakeholders.
   b. Provide continuing education opportunities for planners.
   c. Use web-based communication technologies to inform and update planners, policy makers, and communities about cutting-edge planning solutions.
   d. Produce technical reports and other publications for disseminating research findings.
   e. Engage with professional associations and government entities in search for solutions to community challenges.
   f. Expand the department’s reach through activities across the state of Iowa and beyond

Goal 7: Provide opportunities for faculty, student, and community collaboration to plan a better future.

Tactics/Objectives
   a. Involve students in service-learning projects through assistantships, internships, and outreach studios.
   b. Disseminate the research knowledge produced by the faculty to decision makers at local, state, regional and national levels.
   c. Offer educational programs in the areas of planning and community development to at least 50 Iowa communities annually.