

## City and Regional Planning Department 50th Anniversary

The 2017-2018 academic year was marked by celebrations of the City & Regional Planning Department's 50th anniversary. The program officially started in the Fall of 1968 with a Bachelor's degree and added a Master's degree in 1972. The first graduating class had 20 students (18 men and 2 women), and CRP now boasts over 1,500 alumni that are practicing planning in California and beyond.

Celebrations kicked off at the 2017 APA California Conference where the City & Regional Planning Advisory Council sponsored a tour of the LEED Platinum-certified Golden 1 Center and a reception in downtown Sacramento. Celebrations continued with a two-day event in San Luis Obispo on April 27-28, 2018. The first day included studio visits, a campus master plan tour, an exhibit of student posters and reports, and a retrospective symposium when alumni representing various CRP generations spoke and exchanged memories. The first day culminated with a casual reception at RRM Design Group.

The event's second day included more planning-related tours (campus and downtown SLO), a luncheon in honor of recently



**CAL POLY**  
City & Regional Planning

retired faculty Paul Wack and Zelka Howard, and the panel "The Future of Planning: Understanding and Navigating Technological Disruptions". After opening remarks by CAED Dean Christine Theodoropoulos, the panel included presentations by Jesse Dundon (co-founder & CEO, Hathway Mobile Agency), Peter Day (Public Policy Research & Analytics, Lyft) and Josh Grossnickle (director of Marketing Insights, Facebook)

The two-day event came to an end with a Saturday night dinner at Edna Valley Winery. These were great opportunities to reconnect and get updated on the important contributions of CRP alumni to the communities they live and work in and to our profession. If you have not done so yet, we encourage you to participate in our community by joining the City & Regional Planning Advisory Council (CiRPAC), alumni and professional planners committed to assisting CRP in achieving its vision and goals.

In the next pages, FOCUS includes mementos of the two-day event, and reflections from four former CRP department heads.



Cartoon by CRP student Sean McCartney for the Associated Students in Planning of CRP faculty and staff. From left to right: Ed Ward, Dianne Ellis, Earl Starnes, Zeljka Howard, William Howard (Department Head), Steve French, Joe Kourakas, Linda Dalton, Tom Lions, and Michael McDougall.



The large audience of alumni and current students during the panel, with the student exhibit in the background.



Welcoming by CRP Department Head Michael Boswell.

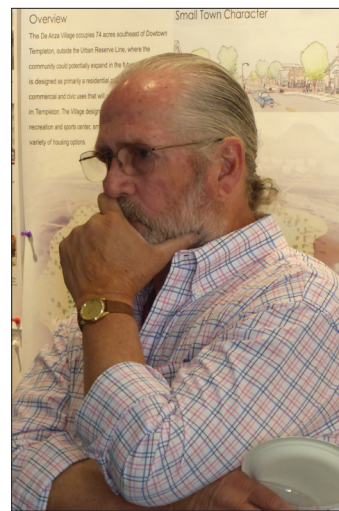
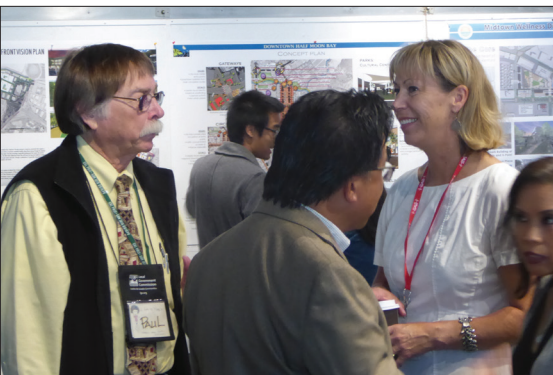
Statements by CRP alumni from different classes: Rich Heckendorf (BSCR, Class of 1970), Ray Hashimoto (BSCR, Class of 1981), and Martha Miller (MCRP, Class of 2000).

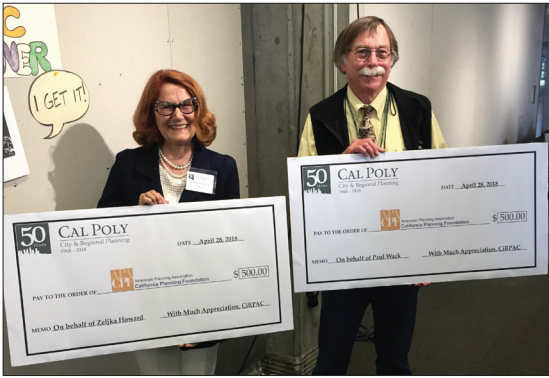


Opening remarks by Dean Christine Theodoropoulos.



Dean Christine Theodoropoulos with panelists Josh Grossnickle, Peter Day, and Jesse Dundon.







## Reflections by William Howard

*PhD, FAICP, Professor Emerita, CRP  
Department Head, 1980-1989.*

"There was a lot about things about outfit they didn't tell me about when I signed on".  
(author unknown)



I was appointed to the School of Architecture and Environmental Design in the fall of 1980 as the first full-time head of the City and Regional Planning Department. My title, as listed in the appointment letter, was Principal Vocational Instructor of the City and Regional Planning Program. While the creation of the CRP Department had been approved in 1978, nothing had been done toward bringing about a structure for the Department.

I was not unfamiliar with the Central Coast of California. While on the staff of the Denver Research Institute, a division of the University of Denver, I was sent to the Central Coast to assess the willingness and capability of the communities in the area to provide off-base support of the opening of the Pacific Missile Range, known today as Vandenberg Air Force Base.

At the time of my arrival, the City and Regional Planning program was comprised of four full-time faculty --Frank Hendricks, Joseph Kourakis, Michael McDougall, Ed Ward-- and one part-time instructor Fredrick Mamarow. The faculty and classes were housed in Engineering West, while the department head's office was in the Dean's office compound. All told, there were 84 students in the Department--78 undergraduate students and 6 graduate students. After one quarter the graduate enrollment was narrowed down to only one. It was evident that if the program was to survive and thrive, recruiting students was of paramount importance. It was also essential to get more faculty, and that was in turn dependent upon getting more students.

I started working with the University's School Relations Office to sell planning as an option for graduates of high schools as well as transfers. Over the years I had made many friends in the University of California and turned to them for attracting possible graduate students. Over the years graduate students came from UCSB, UC Berkley, UC Santa Cruz, and numerous CSU universities. Toward advancing the program, I employed numerous steps.

Along with the head of the Planning Department at Berkley, we invited all heads, directors, and chairs of planning programs to a two-day conference to share experiences to find out what

each program was doing. From that conference, it became clear what the direction of the Cal Poly CRP Department should be: prepare planners for practice. No other program was doing this.

How to accomplish this? I turned to my work experiences prior to coming to Cal Poly. While on the faculty of the University of Colorado I worked extensively and successfully with community - based projects which engaged students in assisting cities to address their planning issues. Foundation moneys primarily funded these projects.

No funds were available to the CRP department to launch such a direction. I was given a departmental expenditure budget of less than \$900.00 for an academic year. Convincing local governments to sponsor class projects was the only answer. This approach proved to be very successful. One year we had a project in Imperial Beach, another in Solvang, another in Buellton, another in Atascadero, Calistoga, and a pattern was established. That has been the basis for the success of the program through time. During that time, we modified the curriculum and introduced an internship requirement for all students. Besides, entering students at both undergraduate and graduate levels were required to attend local government meetings to better understand the workings of their chosen field.

Increasing the visibility of our department and the program was high on my agenda. To this end, the department co-sponsored the California Chapter of APA conference one year on campus and exposed the attendees to the use of computers. We also spearheaded a conference on campus designed to attract young women to the CRP major.

The student enrolment in both the undergraduate and graduate programs increased. At the end of my tenure as the department head in 1989, the CRP Department had 251 students total, 50 of those were enrolled in the graduate program. The CRP Department was the second largest department in the College of Architecture and Environmental Design. The first program accreditation was conducted during my tenure as the department head in 1984.

Moreover, for the period that I was department head, I invited numerous people to visit with the department, some as guest speakers, some as visiting faculty. Among these were: Earl Starnes, PhD. University of Florida, Daniel J. Schler, Ph.D., University of Colorado, and Peter Hall, PhD UC Berkley.

Aside from the individuals named above, there were numerous adjunct faculty who contributed to the advancement of

the programs: Paul Crawford, Kate Foster, Paul Wack, William Walters, Richard Peterson, Ronald Wright, and Leo Jacobsen. We were also fortunate to add new full-time faculty members to the department: Steven French, Linda Dalton, and Zeljka Bilbija. Also, a big salute should go to Diane Ellis. While her title was “secretary”, to the Department, she contributed much more. She guided and assisted students and faculty in many ways. I often thought of her as the “CRP Den Mother”.

Late in my time as department head, I had been approached by representatives of the David and Lucile Packard Foundation to work as a Community Development Director of the City of East Palo Alto, a city named the “murder capital” of the nation in 1993. Academic burnout convinced me to take the challenge. I took a two-year leave of absence. This proved to be one of the most rewarding experiences of my career.

### Reflections by

#### Linda C. Dalton

*PhD, FAICP, Professor Emerita,  
CRP Department Head, 1989-1994.*

**M**y five years as head of the City and Regional Department was a period of consolidation and institutionalization for the department and its undergraduate and graduate programs. Here are some reflections on important events and accomplishments during that time.

My first task during the summer of 1989 was to prepare specialized accreditation documents. The BSCRIP was up for renewal and received reaccreditation later that academic year. However, the master’s degree program had just completed the minimum requirement of granting twenty-five degrees. The Planning Accreditation Board (PAB) initially denied accreditation for the MCRP. We appealed, and the PAB granted a second review, this time finding the program in compliance with the criteria. Since then, both programs have sustained their professional accreditation. My “reward” was to become a member of the PAB itself and review many other professional planning programs as a PAB member or site visitor over the next three decades.

The faculty was small yet very committed to the Cal Poly Learn by Doing tradition in planning. I recall we had about seven full-time positions and two or three regular lecturers. I followed Bill Howard as department head. We had some losses: Ed Ward passed away, Mike McDougall retired, and Steve French left for Georgia Tech (where he is now Dean of

the College of Design). Others passed through – Linda Day, David Dubbink, Mike Smith-Heimer. And, some of the faculty hired or renewed during this period became long-standing contributors to both programs – Zeljka Bilbija (now Howard), Chris Clark, and Paul Wack. Joe Kourakis was there throughout and succeeded me as department head. Dianne Ellis, our only full-time staff, brought her wry sense of humor and sincere concern for students to the department.

We undertook curriculum development, refining the course requirements for both the BSCRIP and MCRIP while retaining a strong focus on lab experience. Also, we worked through University processes to achieve approval of a joint degree in Transportation Planning with the College of Engineering.

One of California’s many fiscal crises occurred in the early 1990’s, requiring both enrollment and budget reductions. The CSU offered a “golden handshake” early retirement program to encourage senior faculty to reduce their time commitment. Fortunately for CRP students, the University converted academic positions to budget dollars, so the retirement or semi-retirement of several faculty left the department with sufficient funds to hire other faculty to meet course demand.

At the same time, the department was able to expand its office and lab space in Dexter Hall. The Landscape Architecture Department had been co-located with CRP on the north side of the building. Then LA moved its departmental and faculty offices to the south side, releasing space for CRP. In addition, we were officially designated lab space on both

the first and second floors, giving the department a strong sense of spatial identity.

Students are, of course, the heart and soul of both the BSCRIP and MCRIP programs. I was able to stay connected by continuing to teach planning theory at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, co-teach an occasional lab, and supervise senior projects and master’s theses. Also, I taught the non-thesis option for MCRIP students that encouraged them to synthesize and reflect on their preparation for professional careers. Subsequently, I have enjoyed seeing many graduates of both programs move into increasingly responsible and influential positions as practicing planners.

We had some tragedies, too. I recall, all too vividly, learning of the untimely death of one our talented BSCRIP students who was in his fourth year, close to graduation. We bestowed the degree posthumously to his father – a sad honor during com-



mencement activities that spring. His fellow students planted a tree in his memory in the Dexter courtyard.

In addition to my departmental responsibilities, I learned that being a department head also entailed a leadership role at the College level. I was the first and only woman department head in the School (now College) of Architecture and Environmental Design at the time. The five department heads shared insights into each of our professions and curricula, seeking common ground and ways to strengthen the relationships among our fields. It was my distinct pleasure to serve as part of Dean Paul Neel's team, both in coordinating college strategic planning and in addressing the difficult budget challenges we faced.

This broader role led Cal Poly to sponsor me as an American Council on Education Fellow during 1994-95. When I returned from a year at Arizona State University, I moved into University leadership within the Provost's Office. Eventually, this gave me an opportunity to participate in development and implementation of the 2001 Cal Poly Master Plan, and in the development of the new Master Plan being refined in 2018.

Now, as professor emerita, I continue to think of CRP as my professional home.

### Reflections by

### William Siembieda

*PhD, AICP, Professor,*

*CRP Department Head, 1997-2009.*

Cal Poly's City and Regional Planning (CRP) department started in the 1960's as an idea of George Hasslein, the college dean. He wanted students to get a broad-based and interdisciplinary education about cities that was not available in either Architectural Engineering or Architecture. City Planning that deals with the whole of the built environment became a means for a successful student experience in the College of Architecture and Environmental Design. The department first offered an undergraduate degree, and later on added a Master of City and Regional Planning. Both of these degrees are accredited by the national Planning Accreditation Board.

I was the department head for twelve years, from December 1997 through August 2009. Linda Dalton, who had been department head before me and went on to work in the Cal Poly President's Office on Institutional Analysis and Campus Planning, recruited me to take the position when I was at the University of New Mexico, as Professor in the School of Architecture

and Planning. The move to Cal Poly offered the opportunity to live on the Central Coast, and also to help build a strong professional program to serve the needs of a growing California. Having left California 21 years earlier when I taught at the University of California, San Diego, I knew this was an opportunity to re-engage with the planning profession, and to experience a poly-technic university setting. I wanted to experience the Cal poly "learn by doing" approach to city planning.

For a decade before coming to Cal Poly my research and professional focus had been on Mexico, Latin America and Brazil. I knew more about planning practice, policy and history of these countries than I did California. So, I had a lot to learn.

My first task upon arriving at Cal Poly was understanding the program structure and its student learning outcomes. To my surprise, I found that it was organized to teach students about all the elements of the California General Plan process. California has very strong planning regulations directing what goes into the General Plan; there are seven required elements. and the Cal Poly planning program offered courses in most of the elements, and had an emphasis on urban design skills, and professional practice. In many ways, this gave the students a real advantage in the California job market, as they were ready, upon, graduation, to start on the job.



The CRP program used the "studio" teaching model, which meant progressively more complex problems that built very focused skill sets and taught them to think about "design, "and make visions at the scale of the neighborhood or a large site. While this worked well in other college departments, for City Planning it required some adjustment to the fact that cities are complex systems, not simply sites that accommodate buildings. The CRP studio model used teams of students to work together and develop solutions. It is different than the Architecture or Landscape Architecture studio model where a single student works on a solution. California in the

early 1970's had adapted its own environmental quality laws for the protection of fauna and flora, and to lower impact of air pollution. By the time I arrived these laws had expanded and impacted the built environment. Thus, environmental studios were added in CRP to meet the changing needs of professional planning education in California. The downside of this was that we were California-centric and offered few courses to broaden the student's educational experience.

Due to the professional nature of the degree program, I spent time in the early years getting to know the CA planning profes-



sions. This meant attending meetings of the Association of California County Planning Directors and the State Chapter of the American Planning Association to understand the needs of “industry” (the term used in our college for employers of our students). Building links with “industry” had many benefits. It expanded opportunities for student internships, increased job placement, helped to identify community-based studio projects, and help to market our program throughout the state. These were “outside” of campus activities helped to overcome the campus’ physical isolation from California’s larger cities.

When I came to Cal Poly in 1997, CRP had a very small budget to support student and faculty activities. In terms of technology we had one small windowless room with less than 10 computers, no internet connection, and no printing. So, my first task to improve the educational experience, was to get an internet switch connection installed.

The first donor relationship I managed to attract was a recent graduate who spent money from his first professional job to buy us a printer for the computer room. He simply felt we needed it and this was his way of giving back. His act of generosity was followed by many alumni who have always been there to help and share. When I stepped down from being department head there was a new computer lab, with 30 equipped workstations, an overhead projector, a scanner, and color printer. It was made possible by donations from alumni that supplemented state funds. Through the years we received many gifts and endowments, some being several hundred thousand dollars. This taught me that our students were making life-long connections with us; something that I did not have with my own undergraduate experience.

A department head always wonders how good is the education being provided? I began to get an answer when one of our undergraduate students was awarded the national prize for best student project by the American Planning Association. It was followed by other national and state awards for students and for studio projects. The awards were always a source of pride for me, as they validated our student’s educational achievements by being recognized by the professional association.

Upon arriving at Cal Poly, CRP had three tenure-track faculty, one full-time lecturer. When I stepped down as department head there were eight tenure-track faculty, two full-time lecturers, and some great part-timers. This expansion in faculty allowed us to expand the environmental planning and the urban design courses and start offering courses in climate adaptation, community development and transportation. It also provided the faculty needed to expand the master’s program and bring on students from throughout the country.

In 2003 we tried to expand the master’s program through a partnership with San Francisco State, another CSU campus. This was an innovation attempt to offer our master’s degree in the Bay Area and give all our students an opportunity to have an urban experience, and we could tap into a more diverse pool of students in the Bay Area. After a year of work this innovation fell apart as we could not reach a workable agreement with SF State. This was a disappointment but allowed us to understand our strengths and possibilities for future studio courses in the Bay Area.

Recruiting a diverse student body, that reflected the changing profile of California was the biggest challenge I faced, and the one where progress was slow. Part of the challenge was geographic, and part of it was institutional. Cal Poly is in a small town, in a small county, and not an attractive place for diverse students to come to. Other universities, closer to large cities had an advantage over us. Second, Cal Poly requires a first-year student to choose a major at the time of application. City Planning, not being known well as a profession was at a disadvantage due to the application process. Third, over the years Cal Poly reputation rose and the scores needed to gain entrance rose. It added to the diversity challenge for CRP. To offset this, I sent students teams to local community colleges to speak directly with potential transfer students. This helped a bit, but never was enough. I wish we could have done better.

Hiring excellent faculty is the most important thing I did as department head. This includes lecturers and part-time faculty. These are the people who interact most with students, and provide the motivation, set the bar for learning, and provide guidance in many ways. Finding the right people, was a challenge at times. Some faculty left us as their family needs could not be met in a small town such as San Luis Obispo. So, faculty “care and feeding” was always high on my list of everyday tasks. One faculty member liked the fact that I would visit them in their offices, thus creating a safe space for open conversation. I saw great potential in each faculty member and kept them informed of different grant and professional development awards.

As tuition and fees started to rise year by year finding funds to support student costs became an essential task for me. For a few years in the mid-2000’s we had received three HUD Community Development Fellowship awards, totally \$360,000. The only other California programs to receive these awards were UC Berkeley and UCLA. Over time were replaced by private donor awards and many small scholarship endowments. Part of student success, aside from the education program, became, for me, financial support. City and Regional Planning has a particular challenge in that two-thirds of our graduates enter public sector employment when they graduate. This is not the case

for the other departments in the college, where private employment is the norm. I knew that networking with planning professionals was important for our students, so with student extra fee support we began the practice of one paid trip to the national American Planning Association meetings. This has proved an important student career networking activity and brought new interest in their following year's academic studies.

Even though some faculty would call me "boss," I did not see myself as one but more of a colleague who was in a leadership position. Department heads in the college serve at the pleasure of the dean, and usually stay in the post for many years. This is different than the department chair model who generally serves a three-year term. Over time, I realized that the faculty and the students had their own thoughts about me, and what I did. At times they were supportive, but at times they would have liked me to leave and be replaced by someone else. There is always a tension between the department head, who takes a long-range view, and those who wish their own interests served in the short term.

During my tenure as department head, and continuing on, the department developed an exceptional record of innovation in community-based studios conducted all over California. This meant looking beyond local cities in the county for projects that produced a higher level of work on par with practicing professionals. It resulted in a many statewide and national awards for the quality of community-based studios. We expanded the type of studio projects undertaken including urban design and climate action plans. At times, students were working at the cutting edge of professional practice, and this turned out to be an important factor in getting a job after graduation. From my point of view experimentation in community-based studio work was to be encouraged.

Taking students abroad (outside of the US) to engage in real projects was a special experience for me. In 2000, 16 CRP students and two faculty (Michael Multari and Richard Lee) went to Tegucigalpa, Honduras to plan and design a new community for 20,000 families. This was to be built in the Aramateca Valley as a resettlement site for families losing their homes in Hurricane Mitch. The plan was the first sustainability-based plan of its kind in Central America. It called for buffering the waterways to accommodate flooding, preserving the forest areas to prevent landslides and using as many natural systems as possible as natural systems infrastructure elements. We partnered in this project with the newly formed Center for Architecture, Design and Construction (CEDAC) a small private Honduran University.

This experience demonstrated the value of educating with a global perspective. Before I came there were no international

exchange agreements. When I stepped down there were interchange agreements with: Switzerland, Brazil, Mexico, and Honduras universities. To support the desire for more global education I supported non-US faculty to come and teach or to conduct research at CRP. This resulted in great people from England, Mexico, Brazil, and Canada sharing their expertise with us for an academic year or less. This gave us a bit more of exposure to other planning approaches, cultural differences, and new possibilities.

I was fortunate to be able to partner with CRP faculty in scholarly and applied work. We started publishing the FOCUS journal in 2003 thanks to an idea from Vicente del Rio. I participated in a wonderful co-edited book on Brazil (with Vicente del Rio), the California Climate Action Guide (with Adrienne Greve), the State of California Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan, and several academic articles (with Ken Topping and Michael Boswell). The experience allowed me to participate as a peer, not a department head. I certainly benefited from these relationships over the years. These experiences also helped model the possibilities for scholarship within the Cal Poly and the emerging "teacher-scholar" model.

When I came to Cal Poly the five-department heads had a great deal of interaction on the programmatic and personal level. They were the main input to the Dean about what the college was and should be. There were social events, and the sharing of resources. People were interested in helping out. In 2000, the Head of the Department of Construction Management, Jim Rodgers, and I responded to an assistance request from the US Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to help HUD develop an assistance program for countries impacted by Hurricane Mitch. We boarded a plane, when to Central America and then give Andre Cuomo, the HUD Secretary a proposal for spend \$10 million on various assistance projects. This positive experience with a CAED department head established a firm belief that working in a multi-disciplinary way is superior to being siloed. I always tried to work and encourage work across departments whenever possible.

By 2008, the experience of helping with post-disaster recovery in Central America influenced my applied and scholarly research paths. The department was in good shape, and it was time to shift from program administration to applied research. With the blessing and support of Tom Jones, the CAED Dean, a national search for my replacement was launched. The search was successful and in 2009, new department head, Hemalata Danekar jointed the department from Arizona State University.

## Reflections by

### Hemalata (Hema) C. Dandekar

*PhD, AICP, Professor,*

*CRP Department Head, 2009-2016.*



When first offered the CRP department head position, I saw it as an opportunity to join a faculty and department that was widely recognized, to participate in delivering a distinguished, studio-rich curriculum; and to support advocacy of planning for the environment and climate change. I did not know much about CRP or Cal Poly when I first visited Pismo Beach in March 2007 to attend ACSP's Planning Administrators Conference. Hosted by Cal Poly and held in a hotel with breathtaking views of the shimmering blue Pacific Ocean, it was an eye-opening exposure to the Central Coast. I had not ventured this far up the coast as an architect practicing in Los Angeles nor later as a UCLA doctoral student. Then Director of the School of Planning at Arizona State University, I took a flight from Phoenix to San Luis Obispo (SLO) sitting next to a woman who lived in Arroyo Grande. She offered me a ride to my hotel, saying "it's right on my way home." She pointed out wineries and landmarks in the stunning scenery we passed along the way. Her friendliness and pride in place was a refreshing contrast to big-city brusqueness and indifference.

During a break in the conference, co-chair Bill Siembieda invited me to join him for a quick visit to the CRP offices and the Cal Poly campus. The trip revealed to me a beautiful campus, a city that had asserted planning to develop a contiguous scenic greenbelt, and an ambition to live sustainably was reflected in the LEED Gold Certified Poly Canyon Village student housing which was under construction. At that time the CRP department was located in the Dexter Building where faculty offices and studios adjoined a collegial central space with tables on which there was student work of impressive design quality. Professor Zeljka Howard was in her office, door open, grading. As we were introduced, she exclaimed she had used my edited book, *The Planner's Use of Information in the studio* "for years." I complimented her on the quality and graphic skills of CRP student work. A Thursday evening visit to the SLO Farmers Market heightened my appreciation of the sense of place that was so palpable in CRP, at Cal Poly, in the City of San Luis Obispo, and, on the Central Coast. It was a short but memorable first encounter.

More than a year later, Bill called to inform me that he was stepping down as Department Head, that there would be a search soon, and I should consider applying. David Conn, a friend since my UCLA days when I took his economics class and by then Cal

Poly's Vice Provost for Academic Programs and Undergraduate Education, , urged me to apply: "you know this is a place where it is possible to find a job/life balance." I had never heard this said of the University of Michigan or Arizona State University, until then my primary academic homes.

First impressions can be telling. Mine shaped my subsequent actions and led me to become a CRP department head and build on existing, and considerable, strengths. These included: reinforcing the curriculum of two robust planning programs; building on the goodwill of alumni and an external community of well-wishers to engage them with

CRP; and, finding ways to create a sense of centered space and cohesion for the department.

#### Sense of Place

By September 2009 the CRP department had moved from the Dexter Building into Building 21, also known as Engineering West. The department office got physically separated from faculty offices and CRP studios. Undergraduate and graduate spaces were on different floors, unconnected and distant from each other. We installed CRP signage at the two ends of the "CRP" corridor, created wall displays for posters of exemplary, often award-winning, CRP studio work, refreshed the CRP computer room with new machines and projection system, repaired lockers, and applied fresh paint liberally. These actions served to upgrade the shared spaces that all CRP students used and where "serendipitous" encounters were possible. The "Exhibit Corridor" assumed even more importance when the department offices moved to an even more distant location in Building 5. The displays inform potential students, visitors, returning alumni, and the public about CRP students and faculty work.

#### Curriculum

A curricular emphasis on land use, physical planning, design, and the environment is long-standing in CRP, embedded in the culture of the college and the other departments. This resonated with my perspective, and it was where the field of planning was beginning to return to and emphasize. Understanding that faculty drive the curriculum, my effort as Department Head was to help them sustain existing strengths and to introduce elements that would enrich the collective effort. It included:

**Increasing Studio Sponsorship:** Email requests to a list-serve of our friends and professional contacts once or twice a year, and triaging responses to instructors of appropriate courses, increased the number of the upper-division city-sponsored

studios that received “soft money” funds. External sponsorship brings a real-world urgency to the work undertaken in studios. Interaction with client and community increases the sense of responsibility and the effort students put in on course assignments. However, such external studio support places an extra burden on instructors as it requires that they contribute time and effort at the beginning and, particularly, at the conclusion of a course to compile student work into deliverables. Successfully persuading the University Office of Sponsored Research to allow us to tailor project budget overheads to differentiate between student and faculty effort enabled faculty to receive some “soft-money” compensation for some of the extensive time they had regularly volunteered.

*International Exposure:* Encouraging CRP faculty-led courses and workshops in international locations led to classes in Puebla, Mexico; Lisbon, Portugal; Istanbul and Kas, Turkey; San Miguel de Allende, Mexico; and a studio-based project for sustainable “organic” development of a village in Vietnam sponsored by Eric Lloyd Wright Architects. Several new electives were encouraged and created, including a new course on International Development Planning, and are now part of the CRP elective offerings.

*Student Competitions:* CRP faculty provided, sometimes as overload, mentorship to the teams entering the Bank of American Affordable Housing Challenge. Under four years of CRP faculty mentorship during my term as Department Head, Cal Poly teams won in the first three years and came in a very close second in the fourth. CRP faculty also mentored graduate teams in the Urban Land Institute Competitions which included students from Business and Architecture.

*Faculty and Instruction:* The strength of a program’s curriculum depends quintessentially on the expertise and enthusiasm of its faculty. We hired two full-time faculty who brought additional expertise in subject areas, and, fresh ideas and energy to the department. A course on web-based planning technologies was offered to undergraduates and graduates, taught by an expert who had recently moved to SLO. It continues to be a popular offering. A brown bag lecture series hosting visiting and resident experts helped engage the department collective in issues of current interest. An investment of Errett Fisher Foundation grant funds on equipment to create a “smart” studio has enabled faculty to bring expertise from around the country, and internationally, into our classrooms. The “smart” studio helps bridge the distance to our somewhat isolated location on the central coast. A Climate Action Planning conference, organized by CRP faculty specializing in environmental issues, attracted researchers and practitioners from around the State to campus and gave students an invaluable window on emerging practices and policy.

### Visibility and Outreach

As part of a concerted effort to reach out to CRP alumni and friends, a CRP quarterly newsletter was developed and published. Featuring department news, current events and success stories, it was designed to augment the outreach of the annual issue of the department’s journal FOCUS. In 2009 we initiated a series of articles for Volume VII FOCUS, authored by the Department Head and titled “Learning from California: Highlights of CRP Studios.” Planned to recur every year, they are designed to disseminate information about the various studies completed in our studios throughout California. Over the years, compilations of these articles have provided a synoptic view of our capabilities and served to attract sponsorship. A new department brochure was created, aimed at enhancing student recruitment. The overarching goal of all publication efforts was to make activities in the department more visible to the extended CRP “family.” Visits to offices of alumni served to reveal their considerable entrepreneurship and success. These visits paved the way to highlight achievements of some alumni in the CAED’s magazine. The City and Regional Planning’s Advisory Council (CiRPAC) was inaugurated in May 2015, and many of these same alumni gladly joined in and supported its efforts. Their continued participation in the Council consolidated relationships and provide momentum and advocacy for fundraising, social gatherings and, most recently, for the 50th CRP Anniversary reunion.

### Fundraising

Helping grow endowed scholarships and grants was important. Following years of generous and on-going funding, a site visit by the Errett Fisher Foundation Board culminated in a five-year quarter-million grant for student and programmatic support. Two endowed scholarships to support students interested in physical planning were established by Arnold Jonas, former San Luis Obispo Planning Director, and his wife Gail to support student with an interest in physical planning. The groundwork was laid for other endowed scholarships, including those to honor prominent alums. Dedicated scholarships and support are invaluable to CRP to attract top students and sustain them during their time here.

### Department Culture

Academic departments flourish when faculty, staff and students have a sense of belonging and commitment to the whole. Ways to encourage this is more an art than a science and, although efforts to cultivate it can have unpredictable results, it is essential and can yield innumerable, mostly qualitative but essential benefits, including improved morale. A complete turnover in staff and relocation of office space not

once, but twice, took a toll. However, success in increasing department staffing to two full-time positions and the hire of two tenure-track faculty were important milestones. Hosting get-togethers at home, arranging celebrations at years-end, recognizing book publications and retirements, and including adjunct faculty in department retreats represented some of my efforts to facilitate a collegial culture.

#### External Contributions

Voicing a planning perspective as a four-year term member of City of San Luis Obispo's Cultural Heritage Commission and as a five-year, continuing member of the Planning Commission represented my commitment to the CRP faculty tradition of engagement with the local community as professional service contributions. Membership on the SLO Land Use and Circulation Advisory Committee which guided the city's general plan update, and on the San Luis Obispo Housing Trust Fund Board have given me a voice in guiding policy and investments in the community. Involvement in the city on-going planning efforts added currency to my classroom teaching.

I am grateful and honoured to have had the opportunity to serve as the CRP Department Head. The position has allowed me to help build on the strengths of the department, and now to continue to contribute as a faculty member and help train outstanding, hardworking, enterprising students. Also, as significant is the fact that I was allowed to join and become a part of the extended CRP family, engage with and thrive in the local city community, and enjoy finding a job/life balance in a lovely part of this country.

