

# Humphrey School of Public Affairs University of Minnesota

## *Planning and Design for the Urban Public Realm* PA 5290 – Syllabus – 2019

September 6, 2019



### **Course Information:**

PA 5290, Section 5, 1.5 Credit Hours (half semester course/seven sessions)  
Friday Mornings, 9:00-11:45 AM, Hubert Humphrey Center, Room 30  
Seven class sessions, September 13 – October 25

**Instructor:** Peter H. Brown, AIA, AICP, Ph.D.  
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**Website:** <http://www.peterhendeebrown.com/>  
**Cell Phone:** 612.501.9590

### **Office Hours:**

I will stay after class to answer questions most weeks. I am available by appointment either in person or by phone and will respond as quickly as I can to email. (Do not use my UMN email.)

### **Communications:**

In addition to Canvas, I will send emails to the entire class from time to time so you are responsible for regularly checking your UMN email account. Let me know if you use a different email address.

## Introduction

The flight to the city is on, and to enhance both productivity and quality of life in our cities, we must invest in our urban public realm. Many of the 75 million members of the millennial generation are abandoning their suburban upbringings and demanding a new urban lifestyle, complete with new real estate product types for living, working, and playing, all with an emphasis on shared social spaces – inside and out. Many of their parents – the 74 million baby boomers – are demanding similar things. Together, these two cohorts represent nearly half of our population and they have started to reshape our cities in powerful ways.

Cities need to reinvest in older parks, plazas and streets, but they also need to provide new public spaces in developing areas that never had them - waterfronts, industrial sites, rail yards, and acres of surface parking. As important is the re-envisioning of the public right-of-way – the street – as a place that accommodates not just cars but multiple transportation modes including buses, rail, bicycles, and scooters and other forms of personal transport, all integrated into an accessible, pedestrian-friendly, and green environment. The greening of city streets is critical for the creation of lush and livable places while also producing social, economic, and environmental benefits.

Perhaps most important, the work of improving our public realm requires a commitment to multi-disciplinary collaboration and broad and genuine stakeholder engagement processes at an entirely new level. Complicated public realm projects require a form of project team leadership that looks more like representative democracy than a single design visionary. Facilitating this process – and successfully building this new public realm - requires uniquely skilled and open-minded planners and designers who can help us all envision a better way to live together in our cities.

The purpose of this course is to help planners, designers, and other city builders come to understand the opportunities and challenges of project implementation through the lens of a specific project type: *The Urban Public Realm Project*.

## Course Objectives

The course integrates theory and practice into a framework for understanding the implementation of urban public realm projects – from inception through construction, start-up, and ongoing operations. Students will learn how planning, design, finance, and politics must be integrated into a single overarching vision if a project is to be successfully completed. Students will pursue the following three objectives:

**Passion:** Develop a general interest in and understanding of the urban public realm, the role of planning and design in creating good public places, and the “who, what, where, why, when, and how” of public realm production.

**Tools and Skills:** Learn how to evaluate the character and quality of public spaces and use analytical tools and skills to study how urban public realm projects are implemented – from inception, planning, stakeholder engagement, project management, and funding through design, construction, and ongoing operations once completed. Students will

create summary budgets, timelines, narratives, and organizational charts for use in studying actors and processes and summarizing how a public place comes to be.

**Generalization:** Learn how to apply this framework for understanding implementation – the process of taking a project from vision to reality - across a broad range of urban development projects.

## Context and Questions

**The course will consider the following topics:**

- History and character of the urban public realm
- Recent trends, re-urbanization, and increased demand for public realm
- Public realm projects in the 21<sup>st</sup> c. American City with a focus on the Twin Cities
- Creation of the Public Realm – the Capital Project: Planning, design, construction, funding
- Management of the Public Realm – the Operating Model: Operations, maintenance, programming/activation, and ongoing funding
- Types of owners, operators, and funders: Cities (city parks departments, independent park boards, public works departments), conservancies, special districts, business improvement districts, private owners, etc.
- A framework for implementation: Vision=Planning+Design+Politics+Finance
- Funding, fundraising, finance and the role of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in public realm projects
- Miscellaneous Topics: Typologies, S, M, L, XL, pocket parks, temporary projects, pilot projects, parklets/lots, park equity, surveillance/privatization of public space, privately owned public spaces (POPS), heritage, historic preservation, historic landscapes, public art, landscape urbanism, green urbanism, how parks change/adapt over time, accessibility, crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED), public safety, homelessness, etc.

**Students will seek answers to the following questions:**

- What is the public realm?
- What are the different types of public realm?
- What is good urban design for the public realm?
- What are the most important features of a successful public space?
- What are the characteristics of a successful public realm project?
- What are strategies for successful project implementation?
- Who drives the production of the public realm, what are their interests, and how do those interests affect outcomes?

## Course Format, Work Product, and Evaluation

The instructor will present short tutorials, case studies, and lectures on background topics such as project economics, design and construction, stakeholder engagement, and politics. The instructor will facilitate class discussions of the readings, current relevant news, and brief individual student presentations of papers. For the week two class session (week three, if rain) we will take a walking tour of the urban public realm in

downtown Minneapolis and stop to discuss the readings for that week along the way. There will be two panel discussions with local public realm experts in weeks four and six. Coursework will include three graded assignments that will build upon one another. **Each of the assignments will be an individual paper of 600 words, illustrated with plans, pictures, tables, and other graphics to explain your thinking and including discussion of ideas from several of the readings.** The first paper will be based upon your own personal experience of a public place, the second will be an analysis of how a place was created, and the third will be a personal summary of what you have learned and how you think about the challenges and opportunities of producing the public realm.

**Assignment #1: Response Paper – Why this place? 30%**

Passion. Write a personal essay about a place. Start with why you care about this subject and then offer your own brief definition of the “urban public realm.” Select a place, study it, and describe it: The location, physical space, character and quality of the place, uses and users, overall experience, what works and what doesn't, and your overall assessment. Visit the place several times, at different times of the day, on different days of the week (weekday/weekend), for an event, and when it is un-programmed. Why did you pick this place? Do you love it, hate it, feel ambivalent, or just are not sure? What public realm issues in particular are highlighted by your place? Include one or two photos and a plan. Cite at least three readings: Which ideas from the readings most helped inform or illuminate your understanding of the place?

**Assignment #2: Project Analysis – How was it created? 30%**

Tools and Techniques. Select a public realm project in the Twin Cities that has been completed or initiated since 2000. This should be a different place from the one you used in the first assignment. Collect information and use it to describe how the place came to be. Whose idea was it? Who promoted it? Who designed it? Who paid for it? Who were the stakeholders? How does it operate/work today? What were the controversies? How did it turn out? The final product will be a concise narrative that tells the story of how the place was created. Discuss vision, location and size, design, key features, budget, funding, timeline, stakeholders, planning, operations, key actors, outcomes, and current status. Illustrate your paper with a timeline, budget, plans, pictures, and other relevant information. Cite at least three readings (different from the first paper): Which ideas from the readings most helped inform or illuminate your understanding of how the place was created?

**Assignment #3: Final Paper – What have you learned? 30%**

Generalization. You will write a paper that summarizes how you think *now* about the public realm and what you have learned in the class. Summarize the key learnings and conclusions from your analyses, observations, and personal experiences. Illustrate the paper with photos, plans, tables and other information as required explain your observations. Your paper must reference at least five (5) readings from the semester that you found helpful in understanding the public realm. Include your personal critical observations on the strengths and weaknesses of the places you studied and the challenges and opportunities of public realm production. Make your own argument: *What do you think the greatest challenges and opportunities are for urban public realm production in the 21<sup>st</sup> century city?* Students will present their final papers in the last class in summary form. This should be a short, five-minute talk and you will summarize two or three key lessons or ideas you found most interesting.

**Only submit quality work product**

Please be sure to submit complete work that has been copy-edited, formatted, paginated correctly, and that is graphically consistent. Print it once, review it, edit it one more time, and finalize it before submitting. **SUBMIT ALL ASSIGNMENTS VIA CANVAS BY 6PM THURSDAY NIGHT, THE NIGHT BEFORE CLASS.**

**Participation:** Because there are only seven class sessions, I will take attendance and I expect you to be in every class. If you will be late, need to leave early, will miss class, or are sick, please send me an email in advance. I expect everyone to do the readings and be prepared to discuss them in class and I will call on you. You will learn by hearing one another's perspectives and ideas. This will not be a one-way lecture class.

### Grading

<b>Assignment #1: Personal Experience – About a place</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Assignment #2: Project Analysis – How was it created</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Assignment #3: Final Paper – What have you learned</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Participation:</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Potential Places to Study (examples)

- Types
  - New Signature Park
  - Revitalized Park
  - Pocket Park
  - Neighborhood Park
  - Plaza
  - Historic Landscape
  - Spiritual Landscape
  - Cultivated Landscape
  - Street
  - Pedestrian Mall
  - Bridge
  - Playground
  - Bicycle Facilities
  - Rails to Trails
  - Expressway lid
  - Levee
  - Infrastructure
  - Street Tree programs
  - Public Art
  - Conservation
  - Environmental remediation
  - Ecological Design
  - Related Amenities/ Concessions
  - Privately owned public spaces (POPS)
  - Urban Core places
  - Suburban town centers
  - Suburban and exurban places
- Sub/exurban Lifestyle centers
- Parks/gardens on vacant lots
- Completed Projects
  - Peavey Plaza (MPLS)
  - Nicollet Mall (MPLS)
  - The Commons (MPLS)
  - Midtown Greenway (MPLS)
  - Gold Medal Park (PPP/MPLS)
  - Minneapolis Sculpture Garden (MPRB/Walker)
  - Mill Ruins Park (MPRB)
  - Federal Courthouse Plaza (MPLS)
  - Pedro Park (Saint Paul)
  - Parklots/lots – parks in the Right-of-way
  - Plaza at Mozaic in Uptown (POPS)
  - Cedar Lake Beach (MPRB)
  - Stone Arch Bridge
  - Samatar Crossing
  - The Shoppes at Arbor Lakes
- In Progress Projects
  - Water Works (MPRB)
  - Scherer Brothers Lumber site (MPRB)
  - Hennepin Avenue (City)
  - Basset Creek Day-lighting (PPP)

## Required Readings

All required readings will be posted on the class Canvas web site. You will not be required to purchase any books.

## Class Schedule

### Week 1 (9/13): Introduction, Theory and Practice of Public Realm Production

#### Read Before Class:

Brown, Peter Hendee, *The Course Syllabus*

Brown, Peter Hendee, *Producing the Urban Public Realm: Field Notes on Project Implementation (UPR)*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Libraries Publishing, 2019, "Introduction: About this Book."

Klinenberg, Eric, *Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization, and the Decline of Civic Life*, New York: Crown, 2018, Introduction, pages 1-24.

Low, Setha, *Spatializing Culture: The Ethnography of Space and Place*, New York: Routledge, 2016, "Chapter 1, Introduction: the importance of and approaches to the ethnography of space and place," and "Chapter 2, Genealogies: the concepts of space and place," pages 1-33.

#### Discussion:

- What is the "Urban Public Realm" and what is "Implementation?"
- A Framework for Implementation; Planning, Design, and Construction
- Readings

### Week 2 (9/20): Place and Space (AND FIELD TRIP)

#### Read Before Class:

Brown, *UPR*, "Chapter 1: Planning."

Davis, Mike, "Fortress LA: The Militarization of Urban Space," in *Variations on a Theme Park*, Michael Sorkin, ed., New York: Hill and Wang, 1992, pages 154-180.

Judd, Dennis R., "Constructing the Tourist Bubble," in *The Tourist City*, Dennis R. Judd and Susan S. Fainstein, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999, pages 35-53.

Molotch, Harvey, "The City as a Growth Machine: Toward a Political Economy of Place," in *American Journal of Sociology*, 82:2, September 1976.

FIELD TRIP – A WALK THROUGH MINNEAPOLIS: We will meet at the Blue Rooster in the Sculpture Garden and walk through Downtown, ending at the Stone Arch Bridge.

#### Discussion:

- Readings (We will stop to discuss the readings along our walk)

<b>APA MN CONFERENCE IN BREEZY POINT, MN, WED-FRI, 9/25-27.</b>
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### Week 3 (9/27): Urban Design – History and Theory

#### Read Before Class:

Brown, *UPR*, "Chapter 2: Design."

Corner, James, "Terra Fluxus," in *The Landscape Urbanism Reader*, Charles Waldheim, ed., Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 2006, pages 21-33.

Harvey, David, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*, New York: Wiley-Blackwell, 1990, Introduction, pages 4-9; Chapter 4, "Postmodernism in the City: Architecture and Urban Design," pages 66-98.

Krieger, Alex, "Where and How Does Urban Design Happen?," in *Urban Design*, Alex Krieger and William S. Saunders, eds., Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009, paged 113-130.

Due Before Class: Assignment #1 + one slide

Discussion:

- Student presentations/discussion of Assignment #1 (5 minutes each max.)
- Readings
- Funding, Sources and Uses of Funds, Capital and Operating Budgets

#### **Week 4 (10/4): Urban Design – Practice**

Read Before Class:

Panelist bios, project websites, and news articles

Brown, *UPR*, "Chapter 3: Finance."

Miller, Kristine F., *Designs on the Public: The Private Lives of New York's Public Spaces*, Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 2007, Introduction, pages ix-xxii, and Chapter 2, "Art or Lunch?," pages 23-44

Whyte, William H., "Introduction," "The Life of Plazas," "Sitting Space," and "Sun, Wind, Trees, and Water," in *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*, Washington, DC: The Conservation Foundation, 1980, pages 16-49

OPTIONAL (recommended for landscape architects): Crewe, Katherine and Ann Forsyth, "LandSCAPES: A Typology of Approaches to Landscape Architecture," in *Landscape Journal*, 22:1-03, 2003.

Panel Discussion: Planning and Design of Public Realm Projects (Local experts)

Discussion:

- Debrief from the panel discussion
- Readings
- Politics, Stakeholders, Communications, Process

#### **Week 5 (10/11): Politics, Stakeholders, Communications, Process**

Read Before Class:

Brown, *UPR*, "Chapter 4: Politics."

Campo, Daniel, *The Accidental Playground*, New York: Empire State Editions, 2013, Prologue and Chapter 1, pages 1-32.

OPTIONAL (Recommended for historic preservationists and those of you who liked Campo's writing about Brooklyn, above): Campo, Daniel, "Historic Preservation in an Economic Void: Reviving Buffalo's Concrete Atlantis, in *Journal of Planning History*, 1:32.

Carmona, Matthew, Tim Heath, Taner Oc, and Steven Tiesdell, *Public Places - Urban Spaces: The Dimensions of Urban Design*, Oxford: Architectural Press, an imprint of Elsevier, 2003, Chapter 12, "The Communication Process," pages 263-282.

Miller, Kristine, Introduction to Design Equity, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Libraries Publishing, 2018, Chapters 1-3, pages 1-14 (keep reading if interested - the whole book is only 60 pages and it is all good)

Due Before Class: Assignment #2 + one slide

Discussion:

- Student presentations/discussion of Assignment #2 (5 minutes each max.)
- Readings

## **Week 6 (10/18): Growth Politics, Finance, and Project Management**

### Read Before Class:

Brown, UPR, "Chapter 5: Vision."

Flyvbjerg, Bent, "Introduction: The Iron Law of Megaproject Management," in *The Oxford Handbook of Megaproject Management*, Bent Flyvbjerg, ed., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017, pages 1-18

Lindblom, Charles E. "The Science of 'Muddling Through,'" in *Public Administration Review*, 19:2 (Spring 1959), pages 79-88.

Sagalyn, Lynne B., "Public-Private Development," in *Journal of the American Planning Association (JAPA)*, 73:1, 2007, pages 7-22.

Panelist bios, project websites, and news articles

Panel Discussion: Implementing Public Realm Projects (Local experts)

### Discussion:

- Debrief from the panel discussion
- Readings

## **Week 7 (10/25): What Have We Learned? Final Papers – Presentations/Discussion**

Due Before Class: Final Assignment #3 + one slide

### Discussion:

- Student presentations/discussion of Assignment #3 (5 minutes each max.)
- What have we learned? How can the course be improved?

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## **Adherence to Relevant University Policies**

In all of your work, students in this course are expected to adhere to the following the following university policies:

1. Grade definitions from the Administrative Policy
2. Scholastic Dishonesty
3. Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences
4. Use of Personal Electronic Devices in the Classroom
5. Appropriate Student Use of Class Notes and Course Materials
6. Student Conduct Code
7. Sexual Harassment
8. Equity, Diversity, Equal Employment Opportunity, and Affirmative Action
9. Academic Freedom and Responsibility: For courses that do not involve students in research

The full text of these polices can be found at the following link:

[http://www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/SYLLABUSREQUIREMENTS\\_APPA.html](http://www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/SYLLABUSREQUIREMENTS_APPA.html).

## **Mental Health and Stress Management:**

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily



activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health Website at <http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu>.

Remember that there are advisors in the Humphrey Student Services office who are trained and experienced counselors. They are available at very short notice to address any concerns you have and provide further resources within the University. **Humphrey Student Services, HHH 280, 612-624-3800**

### **Disability Accommodations:**

The University of Minnesota is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. Disability Services (DS) is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.

If you have, or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attentional, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical), please contact DS at (612) 626-1333 to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.

### **Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Stalking and Relationship Violence**

"Sexual harassment" means unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature when it is stated or implied that an individual needs to submit to or participate in conduct of a sexual nature to maintain their education standing, or when the conduct is severe, persistent or pervasive and unreasonably interferes with an individual's performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment. The University prohibits members of the University community from engaging in, or assisting or abetting another's engagement in, prohibited conduct; requires employees to take timely and appropriate action when they know or should know that prohibited conduct is occurring or has occurred; and addresses violations of this policy through disciplinary or other responsive action up to and including termination of employment or academic dismissal.

For additional information, please consult Board of Regents Policy:

[https://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/Sexual\\_Harassment\\_Sexual\\_Assault\\_Stalking\\_Relationship\\_Violence.pdf](https://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/Sexual_Harassment_Sexual_Assault_Stalking_Relationship_Violence.pdf)

I want to let you know that, in my role as a University employee, I am required to share information that I learn about possible sexual misconduct with the campus Title IX office that addresses these concerns. This allows a Title IX staff member to reach out to those who have experienced sexual misconduct to provide information about the personal support resources and options for investigation that they can choose to access.

You are welcome to talk with me about concerns related to sexual misconduct. You can also or alternately choose to talk with a confidential resource; the University offers victim-advocacy support professionals, health services professionals, and counselors that will not share information that they learn about sexual misconduct.