



UTA STUDENT PLANNING  
ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER:  
MARCH-MAY 2019

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**CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS:**  
ELLEN PHILLIPS (MCRP)  
MATT REEVES (MCRP)



## Join the SPA Board!

The SPA is looking to invite three outgoing students to join the SPA Board! Taking on a leadership position during your undergraduate or graduate studies ensures a pathway to professional excellence. The SPA aims to shape its Board members' academic and professional careers by helping them develop practical skills, such as networking, fundraising, public speaking, event planning, and digital marketing, that the DFW planning community is looking for in not only an employee but in regional leadership.

**Take the next step in your studies and career by joining the SPA Board today!**

If interested or would like to learn more about our open positions please email **Kelsey Poole** at [SPA.CAPPA@gmail.com](mailto:SPA.CAPPA@gmail.com).

All inquiries should include the following:

- Email Title: SPA Board: Desired Position
- Name
- Major

## Open SPA Board Positions

### VP Regional Programing Chair

- Local APATX Sections Representative – President Elect

### VP Community Development Chair

- CAPPA + UTA Relations

### VP Communications Chair

- Social Media + Newsletter

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: KELSEY POOLE (MCRP)  
ASSIGNMENT EDITOR: CATHERINE OSBORN (MCRP)  
ASSIGNMENT EDITOR: SAMANTHA BRADLEY (MCRP)



@UTA.SPA @SPAatUTA

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## DFW PLANNING LECTURES, WORKSHOPS, AND NETWORKING EVENTS

### Sustainable Economic Development Roundtables Discussion

Host: Dallas County Community College  
Date: March 22, 2019  
Location: Cedar Valley College, Lancaster, TX  
Time: 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM  
[Register \(Cost, Free\)](#)

### Citylab High School Summit

Host: City Lab Highschool  
Date: March 29, 2019  
Location: 912 South Ervay Street Dallas, TX  
Time: 11:30 AM – 4:30 PM  
[Details \(Cost, \\$20.00\)](#)

### The Big Event 2019

Host: UTA  
Date: April 6, 2019  
Time: 8:00 AM – 3:00 PM  
Location: Multiple Volunteer Sites  
[Sign Up](#)  
(Registration deadline March 22, 2019)

### Drive.ai Experience

Host: SPA + CSC  
Date: April 12, 2019  
Location: Arlington Esports Stadium  
(1200 Ballpark Way)  
Time: 4:00 PM – 6:00 AM  
[Sign Up \(Limited Space\)](#)

### EarthX 2019 Eco Conference

Date: April 26 – 28, 2019  
Location: Fair Park, Dallas, TX  
Time: 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM  
[Register \(Cost, Free\)](#)

### CNU 27. Louisville Conference

Host: Congress for the New Urbanism  
Date: June 12–15, 2019  
Location: Louisville, KY  
[Register](#)  
(Student Scholarship Deadline  
March 22, 2019)



# JOB OPPORTUNITIES

## DFW PLANNING OPEN POSITIONS WITH LINKS AND APPLICATION POSTING DATES, NOT CLOSING DATES!

### Jacobs: GIS/Transportation Planning Intern

Austin, TX – January 31, 2019

### City of Plano: Planning Technician

Plano, TX – February 19, 2019

### WSP: Environmental Planning Intern

Austin, TX – February 2019

### DART: Summer College Intern

Dallas, TX – February 4, 2019

### TxDOT: Summer College Interns

Austin, TX – Jan–Feb 2019

### NCTCOG: Internships in 'Transportation and Environment & Development'

Arlington, TX – Feb 2019

### City of Arlington: Office of Strategic Initiatives Intern

Arlington, TX, CLOSES 3/14/2019

### Half: All programs interns All offices



# PLANNING IN THE MEDIA

## PLANNING RELATED ARTICLES, OP-EDS, AND PODCASTS

**Title:** The Pedestrian Strikes Back  
**Media Outlet:** The New York Times  
**Topic:** Tactical Urbanism and Public Right-of-Way  
**Author:** Richard Conniff  
[Read](#)

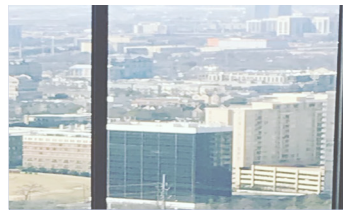
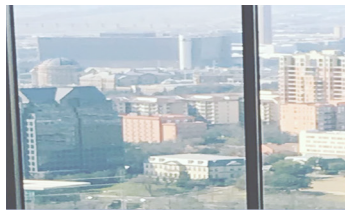
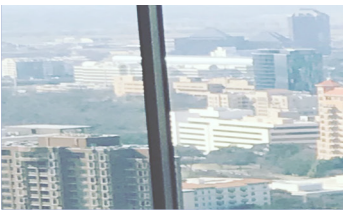
**Title:** Why Controlling 5G Could Mean Controlling the World  
**Media Outlet:** NYT – The Daily Podcast  
**Topic:** The Influence of the Tech Industry  
**Author:** Michael Barbaro  
[Listen](#)

**Title:** No Place Left to Go: Business Districts  
**Media Outlet:** Next City  
**Topic:** Private Sector's Impact on Public Spaces & Homelessness  
**Author:** Rob Waters  
[Read](#)

**Title:** Who Says “B” Malls Don’t have a Future?  
**Media Outlet:** The Robin Report  
**Topic:** Commercial Development  
**Author:** Eric Hertz  
[Read](#)

**Title:** Technopolis  
**Media Outlet:** City Lab Podcast  
**Topic:** Planning & Technology  
**Author:** Eric Hertz  
[Listen](#)

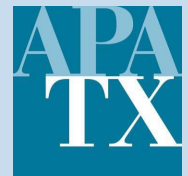
**Title:** Autonomous vehicles: Developing a public health research agenda to frame the future of transportation policy  
**Publication:** Journal of Public Transport & Health  
**Topic:** Public Health & Transportation  
**Authors:** Travis J. Crayton & Benjamin Mason Meier  
[Read](#)



## AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION, TEXAS CHAPTER UPDATES

### 2019 National Planning Conference

Register now for the 2019 National Planning Conference, April 13–16 in San Francisco. Students and new APA members are eligible for reduced rates. Students pay only \$145, more than 80 percent off the regular member price. Student registration includes full program access, a ticket to the Welcome Reception, and much more. All registration rates go up on March 14.



### The New Zoning Practice has arrived!

The February issue of Zoning Practice explores common types of temporary uses and recommends temporary-use zoning provisions. Log in with your APA ID — 355539 — to read why reasonable zoning regulations and procedures are necessary for temporary uses.

### AICP Candidate Pilot Program

Don't forget! If you are enrolled in the AICP Candidate Pilot Program, you must track 16 CM credits before you are eligible to become a full AICP member.



# EVENT RECAP: FOCUS NORTH TEXAS 2019

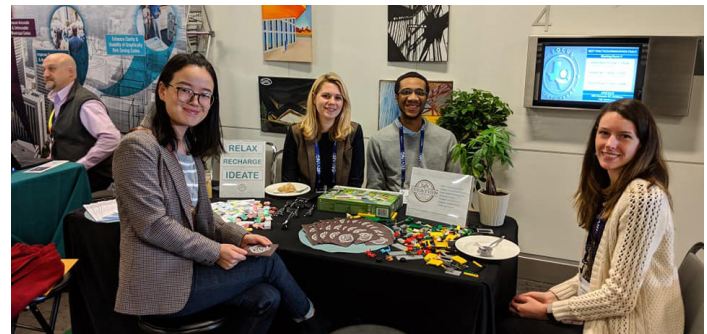
Author: Kelsey Poole (MCRP)



SPA members and planning master's and Ph.D. candidates represented CAPPA at the 9th annual Focus North Texas Symposium, which took place at the Irving Convention Center on February 8, 2019. Students joined experts from around the country to discuss the ways in which North Texas will be reshaped by emerging technologies, climate change, zoning and public policy, and shifting demographics. Remarks made during the opening plenary set the tone for the day. One of the most salient messages was that the time for planning is now. The opening plenary featured a renowned group of planning and policy experts including Michael Morris, Patrick Kennedy, Todd Plesko, and T.C. Broadnax who discussed the complexities and future of mobility in the region.

Opening questions moved the panelists to first have a reflective dialogue about the history of the Dallas–Fort Worth Metroplex's development patterns and transportation networks, and how conducive these currently are to comprehensive mobility in the region. Contemplating the past inspired conversations about future plans for transportation in the region. The panel contended that mobility should not solely be focused on movement or accessibility. Rather, our neighborhoods and transportation systems should be designed to facilitate upward mobility, a point underscored by Patrick Kennedy. Panelists went on to explain that transportation nodes should be multi-modal – that is, designed to connect all modes of transportation, including commuter bus and rail, freight rail, intra-city transit, walking, biking, and automobile. Going further, the panel argued that transportation hubs should not be thought of simply as a means to an end, but rather as part of a vibrant mixed-use destination. The panel also acknowledged the need to seamlessly integrate emerging technologies into transportation infrastructure as society moves into the 4th industrial revolution. Connecting modes of transportation through wireless technology is critical to supporting the next wave of autonomous vehicles, ridesharing platforms, and hypermobility.

Most notably, the dialogue between these transportation experts emphasized that planners need to step up as community leaders, not just to implement plans, but to think about all the ways transportation planning impacts our built environments, socioeconomic groups, and resiliency.







Reinforcing the need for interdisciplinary cooperation, Michael Morris, the Director of Transportation of the North Central Texas Council of Governments, reminded the group of planners, public officials, engineers, and architects of the synergistic benefits of working with organizations like the American Planning Association, which has proven to be “a champion of getting people out of their silos”. Themes that arose during the opening plenary were echoed throughout the symposium’s six speaking sessions, which focused on transportation; resiliency; social equity; ethics; and innovation in design, placemaking, and implementation.

## Key Opening Plenary Takeaways

### T.C. Broadnax:

(CITY MANAGER, DALLAS)

- Plan with a boundary in mind to create seamless mobility
- Focus on data

### Todd Plesko:

(VICE PRESIDENT OF PLANNING AND DEV., DART)

- Don’t just build a transit station, build a neighborhood
- Partner with tech to promote alternative wheels & walkability

### Michael Morris:

(DIRECTOR OF TRANSPORTATION, NCTCOG)

- Recognize the difference between a land use problem & a development problem
- Consider all the indirect and direct impacts of planning
- Use the right performance metrics

### Patrick Kennedy:

(PARTNER, SPACE BETWEEN DESIGN STUDIO)

- Smart cities are not a magic bullet
- Strive for upward mobility not just mobility
- Planners should run for office

PowerPoint presentations from each breakout session and a live recording of the opening plenary on are available on the #FNT209 [website](#).

## EVENT RECAP: FUTURE CITY COMPETITION 2019

The SPA and the APATX Midwest Section volunteered at the 2019 North Texas Future City Competition, which took place on January 26, 2019, at the University of Texas at Arlington. This year’s theme, “Powering the Future”, inspired more than 50 schools from across the State of Texas to develop resilient strategies and designs for a city powered by a grid system.



# STRONG TOWNS CURBSIDE CHAT COMMENTARY ARTICLES

Proponent View: Ellen Phillips (MCRP)  
Counter Argument: Matt Reeves (MCRP)

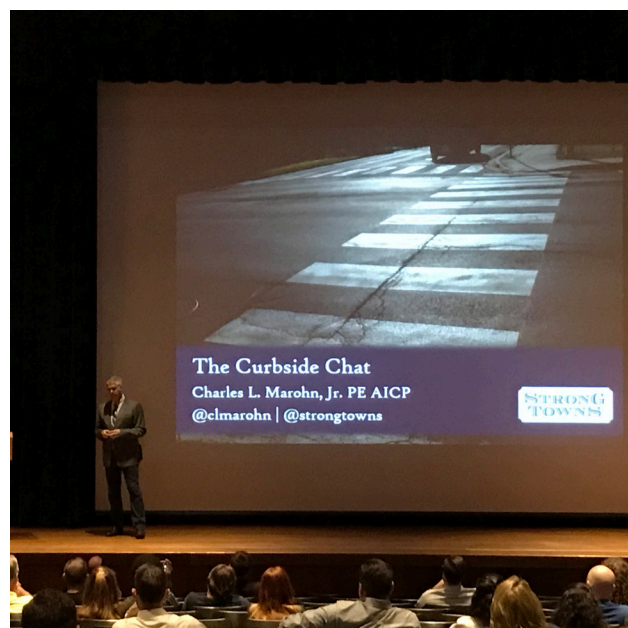
During the Fall 2018 semester, a cross-section of UTA students and city planning professionals gathered in the UTA Rosebud Theater to listen to the president of Strong Towns, Chuck Marohn, explain his vision for incremental growth, density, and infill development. While many attendees agreed with Marohn's prescribed smart growth strategies, some attendees questioned the validity of this approach in the DFW region. Taking two different perspectives, two CAPPA City and Regional Planning students analyzed and considered the legitimacy of the Strong Towns development model.

## Proponent View: Ellen Phillips (MCRP)

Prior to attending the Strong Towns Curbside Chat, I had not heard much about Chuck Marohn or the Strong Towns movement. To get a preview of his ideas, I listened to one of the Strong Towns podcast episodes, in which Marohn explained the differences between historic development patterns (building incrementally) and what we see today (building in a finished state). I was struck by his fresh perspective. Driving through a Dallas suburb, I could see what he meant: These streets of single family homes and chain stores were not intended to become anything other than what they were today, and it was going to cost an increasing amount of money to keep them that way.

In the Curbside Chat, Marohn covered the same ground, with more specific illustrations and cost analysis. For example, he compares the property value of an brand new fast food restaurant in his hometown of Brainerd, Minnesota, with the old strip mall down the street. The sketchy but adaptable shops win with a value over \$1 million while the shiny stand-alone restaurant falls around \$800,000. Not only that, the latter loses value at a much higher rate. The mere potential to evolve seems to give buildings more value than those constrained to one use and one era's preferences.

Beyond the site-by-site comparison, Marohn condemned the overarching practice of building neighborhoods that will never generate enough tax revenue to pay for





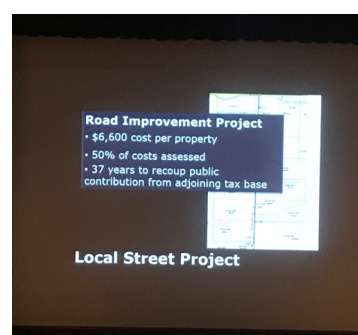
their own infrastructure and maintenance. In the analysis of a handful of cities, Strong Towns has shown that the older “poorer” core basically subsidizes the sprawl of the affluent. The past’s economical urbanism foots the bill for modern prodigality.

While initially persuaded at the Curbside Chat, I have been further convinced by the Strong Towns perspective from reading their blog and listening to their podcasts. I agree that our current development patterns are wasteful, unattractive, and unsustainable. I see many parallels between Strong Towns and New Urbanism, another movement that has greatly influenced my thinking about cities. Both promote human-scaled development and turn

to the past for examples of ideal built environments. However, Strong Towns is more rooted in economic reality. New Urbanists seem okay with giant, built-in-a-finished-state developments, as long as they are mixed use, walkable, and quaint. (Think Seaside, Florida.) Strong Towns’ mantra is incrementalism. We must build what we can afford today and set our cities up for sensible growth over time.

Strong Towns’ message is countercultural. Most people are comfortable with our sprawl and car-dependence. And who doesn’t enjoy seeing an eyesore of a block demolished and turned into a Chipotle and an Apple store? It is a mistake, however, to think our current development pattern is a mere accident or the democratic outcome of a free market. At some point, these practices were decided upon by experts and codified, and – long story short – we got used to it. Unfortunately (or not), business as usual is not an option. Cities will either have to adapt voluntarily and shun quick fixes and unsustainable development, or they will be forced to face the balance sheet one day and deal with it in crisis mode. To emphasize this, Marohn points to Detroit as the first city to fall and a sign for what is to come for others. It will take more than good intentions or a few shiny new mixed-use developments to change the game. It will take a movement.

Strong Towns advocates for a perspective, not a product or prescription. Marohn and his team are not selling a silver bullet or a generic instruction manual, but rather promoting a shift in thinking. To me, this is the most appealing part of this organization. Each city in our country is unique, and while many face similar issues, effective solutions must be sensitive to local history, climate, culture, and situations. Strong Towns’ practical approach to continuous adaptation avoids generalizations and empowers each community to evolve as needed, one step at a time.



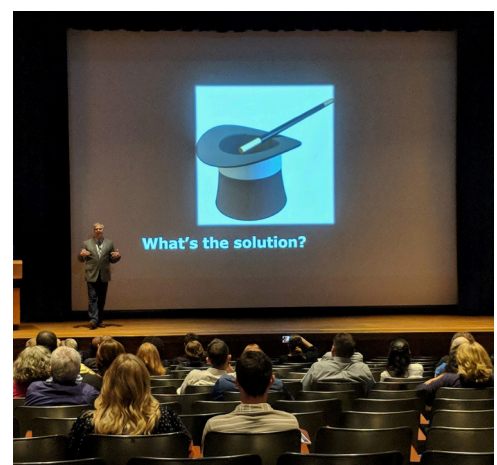
Poised as an introductory account of Strong Towns, Charles L. Marohn presented the Curbside Chat on Wednesday, October 3rd at the University of Texas at Arlington. While it did explain and explore the fundamental aspects of Marohn's vision, the presentation might have felt more akin to a sales pitch by the co-founder and president of the non-profit. Because non-profit organizations need individuals and institutions to buy wholeheartedly into their platform, events such as this provide a strategic opportunity to generate revenue. And Strong Towns seems to sell well, with \$110,435 in membership fees of 2017 (Strong Towns, 2017).

Marohn began with an explanatory account of Strong Town's founding and core beliefs. Some of those core beliefs, Marohn argued, began with the earliest cities in the world, Ur and Rome. He said Ur and Rome, like early United States cities, were examples of thousands of years of trial and error. These ancient cities developed over time to create a functional and economical space when, at the time, the only transportation method for common citizens was walking. These functional cities were founded on pillars of density and incremental sustainable growth – both of which retain value, the flexibility of use, and often generate more revenue than cost. Each of these aspects being target points for Strong Towns.

While listening, I could not, and would not, argue with the facts being presented. In areas like Lafayette, Louisiana; Buffalo, New York; or Crosby, Minnesota where the city's most profitable use of land is being forfeited in exchange for large developments, and those developments are completed with tax subsidies, costly roads, and loans, which remain costly to the city far into the future. These are the locations where Strong Towns has researched and created detailed reports as to where the city is making money and losing money. Charles Marohn and the Strong Towns team appear to have, at least this side of the approach, down to a science.

What strikes me as similar to a sales pitch is the lack of opposing arguments provided during the presentation. It was as if the solution to all DFW's problems could be addressed in the same way as Marohn's examples. He speaks to an idea of small, low-risk incremental growth in dense, typically historic roadside venues. I hear this implication, "keep this area clean, accessible, and stop building a single structure per lot."

The difficulty in this region is the longstanding development pattern of doing the opposite. Nothing I heard in the presentation was said for the cities and areas around the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex that have already chosen to build one building per lot and what will become of them. Marohn criticizes how these larger developments are often abandoned, but does not provide a solution other than to avoid building them in the first place. Furthermore, the rapid population growth that DFW is experiencing today sets it apart from other regions around the





United States. A growth that demands large development solutions that incremental development could likely not achieve in time and does not come with the short-term profits that developers desire. For reference, Dallas and Fort Worth placed 3rd and 4th, respectively, for the largest numeric population increase between July 1st, 2016 and July 1st, 2017 (US Census Bureau, 2018).

Strong Towns may also face an uphill battle with Texas’s public opinion. Marohn had wonderful points about the benefits cities would receive financially for embracing Strong Towns, but what about the individuals? Many Texans still choose the suburban house with a yard and a ten-minute drive to the one-stop-shop over dense, walkable neighborhoods. He mentioned that cities should stop embracing the idea of “build it and they will come,” but rather expand existing structures when the demand exists. What if the Texans still demand their Wal-marts and suburbia?

During the Curbside Chat, Marohn does a wonderful job to present the strengths of Strong Towns’ ideas but spends little to no time about the almost unrealistic expectation of a dense, walkable DFW.

Even with the lack of oppositional material, I bought it. I want small sustainable development, and I agree that cities should be investing in both the long-term land use and in creating micro-economies that are more resilient and diverse. I want a local government that spends taxpayer money on what will achieve the most return. But is it as obtainable for DFW as Marohn’s Curbside Chat makes it seem?



THE SPA WANTS TO KNOW WHAT CAPPA STUDENTS ARE WORKING ON AND READING! EMAIL SPA.CAPPA@GMAIL.COM TO BECOME A CONTRIBUTING AUTHOR OR TO SHARE ANY PLANNING RELATED ARTICLES,

The University of Texas at Arlington

# STUDENT PLANNING ASSOCIATION

THERE’S A PLACE FOR EVERYONE IN PLANNING!

