

# Sustainable Suburbs

## STUDIO

Suburbs are the fastest growing areas of this country. Most construction, a majority of population, and a majority of jobs currently exist in the suburbs. While some changes have occurred since William Levitt first broke ground in Levittown in the late 1940's, the pattern of suburban development has remained surprisingly constant in the last 60 years with enclaved, auto-oriented, and detached development being the norm. At the same time, sustainability concerns are at an all time high. Global warming continues to affect climates around the world, household consumption of energy continues to rise, and last year we reached record oil prices.

If we are to deal with sustainability concerns, we must directly deal with the way that suburbs are developed in this country. The studio will focus on sustainable urban design strategies/projects for a suburban area of Gresham, Oregon. The studio has worked with the City of Gresham and has identified the Rockwood Triangle area, banded by 181st on the west, E. Burnside on the north and SE Stark on the south. This area has a diverse population, a mix of housing, commercial, and retail space, a nearby light-rail stop, and a number of large vacant sites. We will be creating a Sustainability Retrofit Plan and potentially develop plans for a specific large retail/housing site in the area. The specific sustainability recommendations from this work will be considered to be included in the City's upcoming Rockwood Design Standards project. We will be using previous research from the Sustainable Suburbs Seminar as a basis for some of our investigations/designs. (Students are not required to have been in that seminar).

This studio will be larger than usual (20+ students) and students will work in cross-disciplinary teams that will include architects, landscape architects, and planners. Four spots are reserved for Landscape Architecture students and four spots are reserved for PPM students. This studio will work in conjunction with a second studio also working in Gresham and taught by Brook Muller.

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This studio and Brook's studio are part of the 2009-2010 School of Architecture and Allied Arts' "Sustainable Cities Year" that is being launched through the Sustainable Cities Initiative (SCI). SCI represents a multidisciplinary research, policy and teaching effort to comprehensively address a range of issues related to urban environmental, economic and social health, including but not limited to: urban design, housing, ecosystem services, governance, stormwater management, transit, and ecological habitat. Each year, SCI will identify a different partner city. For 2009-2010, SCI will be working with Gresham, Oregon.