This Portland-based studio is inspired by the scholar James P. Evans’ recognition of the increasing “spatial demands on cities to deliver densely developed landscapes while simultaneously becoming more environmentally sustainable.” How can we add density to our cities through infill development while not degrading - while possibly even improving - urban ecological function? To what extent can built elements serve as surrogates for natural systems (that for example they provide habitat or that collect and filter stormwater)?

This studio focuses on a multi-story, multi-unit transportation oriented development (TOD) at the “Crossing” in Gresham, Oregon. This studio will explore the potential synergies between TOD and habitat friendly development (HFD). We will work with Josh Cerra, a Portland-based ecologist and environmental designer, as well as team members in Portland Metro’s “Nature in Neighborhoods” and “Transportation Oriented Development” programs.

This studio builds from work produced by students in my fall 2009 Eugene-based studio. Our goal is to utilize previous studio research as a basis for our own design explorations, with the hope and expectation that we will be able to focus our efforts on project development (down to the details).

The studio will first meet on Monday, January 4th. Beginning in week 2, we will meet on Wednesday and Friday from 1:00 p.m. to 4:50 p.m., with an additional 3 hours and 50 minutes of in-studio time to be coordinated by the instructor and studio participants (I will be in Portland every Wednesday morning through Friday evening).

This studio is 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, stormwater management, non-motorized transit and ecological habitat.

Instructor contact information:
Brook Muller, Associate Professor
Associate Department Head of Curriculum and Curricular Innovation
Director, Certificate Program in Ecological Design
bmuller@uoregon.edu • 541 346 3647